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CANADIANS would be better served by a little less conversation and a lot more action

Why we don't need another election

General elections are important occasions in any democracy. As this magazine has frequently noted, they are the only time politicians ask a direct conversation with the public to explain their vision for the country and how it differs from that of their opponents.

But the prospect of a fourth federal election in five years, at a time of great economic uncertainty, leaves us concerned Canadians would be better served by little less conversation and a lot more action. We don't need another election right now. We need our politicians, focused on the business of running the country.

Having worked hard to avoid a summer election, Prime Minister Stephen Harper now appears to be retreating to the prospect of a fall vote. He has refused to co-operate with other parties and seems keen to build a non-confident vote split on the coming session.

The reason for his change of heart seems obvious. It appears the global recession may not be as lengthy or as severe as was once thought, greatly improving the public mood. Federal election strategy is also starting to flood across the country. Whether or not this has anything to do with the budget

recovery (see "What will they run on now?" on page 14), it is raising the profile of the Conservative MPs making these announcements. And as a proven leader and campaigner, Harper may feel he holds a natural advantage over newcomer Michael Ignatieff, the Liberal leader.

For his part, Ignatieff claims he will be bringing down the Conservative majority at his earliest opportunity. "The Liberal party cannot support this government any further," he vowed at his party's summer caucus meeting in Sudbury last month. His speech gave Canadians why he thinks the Conservatives are no longer fit to govern: lack of credibility, messy legislative reform, lack of a debt plan, delays on economic stimulus funding and the state of health care.

None of the four has particularly compelling. Harper is likely to offer some changes to this fall. The Liberals don't have a deficit plan any more than the Tories do. The stimulus funding is ongoing. And health care, when it has been an issue, has been a failure. A more believable argument is the observation that Canada's economy appears to be improving. If such is the case, Ignatieff's broadside that the Tories have been insensitive and incompetent in handling the recession could seem like old news. He may find the need to

ask us while the crisis is still hot.

So both leaders have strategic reasons for wanting a fall vote, but another election so soon after our last in October 2008 serves no higher purpose for the country.

It might be argued that the tough economic climate has created a demand for an election giving voters a choice between the different economic visions of the leading parties. Unfortunately, there is no sharp difference between Liberals and Conservatives on the economy, especially considering that Ignatieff supported Harper's 2009 budget, which is now being implemented. Neither's budget promises to be a more appropriate background. By then we will have real evidence on the success or failure of current policies, and with any luck the Liberals will have developed an alternative economic program. At that point it would be possible to have a proper debate on each party's plan to sustain the 250 billion deficit (as projected by the parliamentary budget officer), among other issues.

Meanwhile, another election would only delay the legislative schedule and put key government programs at risk. The Conservatives have gone to great lengths to portray themselves as tough in crisis. It would seem dangerous to deliberately leave so much business in the air unresolved. Among the bills that would be swept aside by a fall election are pressing concerns to the second-order majority plus important modernization of police engineering of criminal electronic communications.

Finally, if a new election again postpones early elections for himself, he will be making a further mockery of his own fixed election date legislation.

For Ignatieff, the leadership of the Liberal party is still only one month old. Whatever advantage he has as an early election, most Canadians are still unsure about who he is and where he's heading. Recently released leaked e-mails suggest he wants to stick to India and China. That's fine for a start, but hardly comprehensive.

It is one of the few areas in which Ignatieff has shown a bright face between himself and the Tories on a substantive issue. But his argument that a year's worth of benefits should be available after job loss or loss of health care and wholly unworkable. Consider: need to be met before we can pay judgment on the Ignatieff Liberals.

Besides, it's the fall, summer holidays are over, the kids are back at school, everyone else is back to work. Why should government be any different? Elections may be good things, but Canada doesn't need to make it an annual event. Back to work, Ottawa M.

MAIL BAG



UNSOLVED MYSTERY

IT'S A BIZARRE fact that a Canadian red hat, hoodie and rubber TV camera could hang himself in a closet in a motel in Hinge, B.C., after his American ex-wife's body is found by a hotel collector in a suitcase in a dumpster in Orange County—the identification being made by the serial number on her lower jawplate because her finger and teeth had been removed ("Millionaire murderer," *Crime*, Sept. 7). This real-life story goes new status to the writers for CSI, and new meaning to the member Hollywood North. *Russ Reinhardt, Toronto*

TRUE NORTH STRONG?

PRIME MINISTER Stephen Harper has failed to bring the money back to the issue of Arctic sovereignty that he promised during the election ("The cold truth," *National*, Sept. 7). We need to aggressively assert our claim over the Northwest Passage with more than just a trip up there when we hope the weather will be convenient. The reason is more than just uncharted access to resources, security or showmanship. The North is a rapidly declining environment, and we should be aware of ourselves that exploration and first-hand data are needed to make the changes and last but not least, we need to see the U.S. wastes into our territory without our permission. This is our sovereignty and our security we're talking about. *John Baskin, Waterloo, Ont.*

FINALLY, WE'LL see on Canadian Arctic sovereignty should have been on the cover—not the one about a guy and a bomb. *Camie and the Arctic Lounge, Valleyfield, Que.*

PRIVATE MATTERS

THE BANK PRESIDE that private water system and market-driven solutions are the answer to the difficulties of fresh and drinking water distribution is almost laughable ("The market solution," *Environment*, Sept. 7). We've got come through the water recession in six decades, driven by a market wall of control. Would we really trust a private system to deliver consistently as the goal of improved access to clean water and sanitation for all? *Kandy Rinkoff, Calgary*

I AM TIRED of reading articles telling us that the private sector can do it better, especially

'Many people must maintain two or more so-called dead-end jobs just to stay afloat'

when we are in the middle of the worst economic crisis in generations caused by—guess what—the private sector. Sure, the situation of Coca-Cola, Heineken, may not be well served by their public water management system, but that takes us away from the many thousands of public water systems around the world that reliably deliver safe water. Just think if the water crisis that could be controlled if our water delivery systems were managed by former executives from GM, American Airlines, health insurance providers or Bernie Madoff. *Dr. IDC, Grapvine, Ontario*



WORKING HARD FOR MONEY

AFTER READING the headline on Stephanie Pinel's piece on dead-end jobs ("In pursuit of dead-end jobs," *Society*, Aug. 1), I had to ask myself the corroborating tone of the article: "Many people must maintain two or more of those so-called dead-end jobs to stay afloat." There are folks toiling away at these places with multiple degrees and earning minimum wage or slightly more just to go home after a brutal shift with a bruised ego and a sore back. *Jay Gagnier, Thorntown, Ont.*

MIND THE GAP

I THOROUGHLY enjoyed reading Andrew Porter's column ("Generation gap," *Times*, Sept. 1) on a generation that is fearless and expert of good things. They are special because we have told them they are. They were raised in smaller families, their lives

more plan and promising careers, a feel for generation in compliance and lives to bank in itself-possessed success. If anyone generated material material could connect the youth that have ownership, marriage or even company benefits were the "faster and greater" thing, then we wouldn't be having this debate. *Stanton, Ont. Ryan Gabeck, Brampton, Ont.*

ANDREW PORTER's comment that "young" people have "little interest in how the other guy is run and who is doing it" frustrates me and the thousands of other people like me who, frankly, do have an interest. We don't give a "penny" about politics. Tell that to the thousands of students who participate in the Model UN conference. Tell that to all the people in the "paleos and politics" club at my high school, who spend weeks discussing who we're going to convince our significant parents to vote for, since we're at age. Tell that to any of the students choosing to take a politics course over a general one. There are facilities in new universities everywhere devoted to politics, which previously have students in them who were (Cory, I know) bored of learning that because we're young we're indifferent to the nearly half of the eligible electorate who didn't vote last election, give us some credit. *Katharine Widdingham, Apr. 16, Kingston, Ont.*

THIS WAS a refreshing column. I work with teenagers, and although I notice there are things they are complacent about, I continue to work with them because of their optimism and their desire to change the world. Every generation needs against the generation before, and this is necessary in order for society to move forward. If someday a new generation rises up, accepts the status quo and doesn't become a force for change, the world will truly be in trouble. *Kayla Berger, Edmonton*

I WOULD LOVE to think that Andrew Porter's musings about generational differences were accurate. Through my consulting practice, research, and even a look at some of the most successful entrepreneurs and visionaries in Canada, I see a generation that is fearless and expert of good things. They are special because we have told them they are. They were raised in smaller families, their lives

01 Our Expansion

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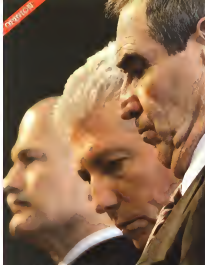
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NINE MONTHS AGO, Ignatieff stood with coalition partners Desjardins and Layton.

Why Harper can't let the coalition die



PAUL WELLS

The Liberals won't be able to say they didn't see it coming.

In the first week of January—eight months ago—Stephen Harper sat for an interview with my boss, Ken Whyte. As he discussed the year he'd just finished, and the one just ahead, Harper kept returning, again and again, to that autumn last December in which the opposition parties responded to Harper's fall economic update by proposing a Liberal-NDP coalition government with Bloc Québécois support.

Why might I think that business was all settled?

Mr. Harper didn't.

"Obviously, if we had an election today somebody will have a majority because it will either Canada's Conservative government or the coalition," the Prime Minister said. "The lion's ears perked up. 'So you think the coalition's going to stick together?'"

Harper elaborated: "Well, if I'm saying if we had an election, if they were to defeat us, and you know my view—if they defeat us, the only constitutional, political and moral option is to ask the people to choose who should govern. And then there will be two choices. And somebody will win a majority if those are the choices."

By now the lion was roaring: this was a big

part of Harper's message for the day: "So you think they'd actually run as a coalition?" "I don't think they have any choice," Harper replied. Or he: "If they defeat us as a coalition they have to run as a coalition, and I think those will be the real choices before the election. The electorate will know that if you're not electing the Conservative government you're going to be electing a coalition that will rule the NDP and the separatists."

I represent this exchange in some length because I have found that Stephen Harper usually tells you what he's up to. Oh, sure, he throws in a touch of disorientation, misdirection, and outright lip-flapping. But usually or least in hindsight you can find a more-bright thread of intent. I have also found that his opponents almost always ignore such threads, preferring to believe Harper is up to something else that would make him easier to beat.

He couldn't possibly be clearer here. And he and his supporters have repeated every variant of this argument in recent weeks, as the possibility of a fall election becomes less hypothetical and, thanks to Michael Ignatieff, moves closer to an inevitability.

On Aug. 25—fully a week before Ignatieff's Sudbury speech in which he announced the Liberals will no longer vote with the government in the Commons—Harper spokesman Dennis Seaman had these curious comments after Harper met privately with Jack Layton: "It was also clear to us that the NDP prefer and want to work with the Liberals and the Bloc Québécois," Seaman said. "Mr. Layton probably waited for this meeting and he certainly hasn't been working with his coalition partners. But the reality is that he is."

That same day a group went up on the Conservative party website with the title, "Ignatieff Will Force Back Coalition."

The Liberals, the NDP and the Bloc do not appear to have given any of this a second's thought.

It's easy to understand why they prefer to reason: The whole notion of an anti-Conservative coalition had more or less vanished from the public discussion. Ignatieff had repudiated his alleged interest in the scheme nine months ago by publicly supporting, vocally and with his signature on a petition to the Governor General, Stéphane Dion's attempt to wrest power from Harper with the support of all opposition MPs. By the new year Ignatieff's formula was "coalition if necessary, but not necessarily coalition." Since the January blunders of his most or less benevolent coalition knowledge in Ottawa that Ignatieff wanted no part of a joint government with the NDP.

Yes he said what he said last December. And, whatever happens now, the unfortunate



'Virus hunter' Bonnie Henry on H1N1, the risk of running out of infection meds, and the perils of pedicures and dirty organic produce

A CONVERSATION WITH CATHY GULLI

Dr. Bonnie Henry is a physician, preventive medicine specialist, and epidemiologist—or "viral hunter." Before becoming the director of public health emergency management at the B.C. Centre for Disease Control, she fought outbreaks of SARS in Toronto and the H5N1 virus in Uganda. Dr. Henry is leading one of the biggest projects for the Vancouver 2010 Olympics: Her new book, Soap and Water & Common Sense, documents our constant loss of the essential resources, bacteria and other bugs, including the new pandemic strain of H1N1.

Q What's your message to parents who are worried about their kids getting winter flu, especially in school settings?

A: Most people recover at home without any need for health care, but parents need to be really careful for two things. One is if their children have underlying conditions that make them have less ability to fight off the virus—bad asthma, diabetes—they should think now about making a plan, talking to their doctor. Because these kids would most likely benefit from antiviral treatment [such as Tamiflu], if your child doesn't have underlying illnesses, you still should be careful. So if they're having shared nose breathing, running blinks, a baby who is very lethargic, irritable, not drinking—these are indications that they should be treated by a physician.

Q: I saw an online poll asking if people thought Canada is prepared for an H1N1 pan-

demic. Seventy per cent said no. Are we?

A: At the moment we're prepared in a way that we can't be, but there's always more to do. One of the things that we learn every time there's a crisis is that getting consistent and up-to-date information to everybody is always difficult. It's important that we get messages to people that are relevant to them in a way that they can understand. We're not always good at that.

Q: I got the impression that, for years we've been looking for the next big infectious pandemic. How much of our concern about winter flu is actually due to the virus's winter profile, and how much is anticipatory anxiety, like we've said?

A: In my world we've been planning for an influenza pandemic for a long time. And you're right, we've been planning for a really bad one. And then it's really bad one. We didn't know that at first. I think the concern that we all had at that time was a lot of concern that that probably engendered a fear response of fear that's now, we realize, unwarranted. A very high-risk disease, it has a one-in-five fatality rate of up to a lot of people who get this—or more—the threat. We were very concerned about being overwhelmed by that. But most people do not get very sick with this strain of H1N1. It's a mild to moderate illness. Now that we understand a bit more of it we're back on track.

Q: The Canadian Medical Association just recently reported that Canada is lagging in getting the vaccine to people who need it most—that waiting until next November anno-

late. The British embassy and chief officer of public health replied that if we need it sooner, it will be available in October. Why's right?

A: I think there are some factual errors in the CMAA article. One is that they say this because we're using—or Glasgow's H1N1 as proof—a vaccine that is in development [a chemical substance that stimulates antibodies], that that's taking longer. That's not true. My understanding is that the vaccine development is progressing at the same rate as for [every other country]. Health Canada has a branch that locates vaccines. They have an expedited process for influenza vaccines, including this one. So it can be done very quickly that there would be no studies done to show that it actually works to protect people and we need to make sure that it's safe. That's what takes time. There's always latency. If we start seeing a lot of people getting really sick and we need it without those studies being finished, then the public health officer has the ability to work with regulators to get it approved more quickly.

Q: You were at the H1N1 medical conference in Winnipeg last week. Since then, the federal government has said it plans to amend "Canada's" potential surge to help hospitals handle a potential surge to answer the question: How would they handle it?

A: Because that took us by surprise around the world is a higher proportion of young people are ending up needing intensive care because of this virus. That can really stretch our ICU system. So this meeting was to make sure we know what resources we have, look

ing at measures that can reduce the need for ICU beds, and that may be temporary suspension of some surgeries, and making sure that there's not a lot of ICU support that can transport people rapidly to and from facilities. That's what we saw a couple of months ago in northern Manitoba. We're trying to pull together in a much more organized way than we have in the past.

Q: Every year many of us debate getting the flu shot or not. Why would it be this year?

A: We have two shots this year, the seasonal influenza vaccination, and the pandemic H1N1 one. We're recommending that the same risk groups get the seasonal influenza vaccine. And for the pandemic vaccine it may be offered to everybody because we know that most people in the population in Canada don't have immunity. There are people with underlying health conditions that make them more at risk for H1N1. So we encourage them to get the vaccine first.

Q: Tell me about the sale of your book.

A: It comes from Dr. William Osler, who was Canadian, although he made his name in the U.S. in the late 1800s as the father of modern medicine. For every bacteria and virus the last common pathway to getting sick is on putting our hands in our mouth. So if we're careful washing our hands, that gives a long way to preventing us from getting ill.

Q: You write that "health officials are concerned that we may run out of medications" altogether: that can treat infections? How imminent is that threat?

A: I don't know how imminent, it's hard to predict that. But we have services, thankfully, many of us, individuals who are infected with certain strains of bacteria that we resist to any medicines we have available. The other side of it is that we haven't put a lot of time and effort into developing new antibiotics. We went through this period where we felt that infectious diseases were no longer a threat. Pharmaceutical companies aren't developing new antibiotics because they don't make as much money off them. So the combination of an increasing level of resistance on the bacteria plus the fact of new antibiotics, could put us in a place where we have infections that can't be treated.

Q: Superbugs are drug-resistant bacteria. H1N1 is a virus, but could it become a superbug?

A: We don't have drugs that actually kill viruses in a very real way, so viruses can develop resistance to the few medicines we do have for viral infections. There are some medicines of drugs that are resistant to some viruses, especially H1N1 is resistant to one of those,

and it's susceptible to others. But we worry that it could develop a mutation that will make it resistant to this drug, which is called oseltamivir, or Tamiflu. If that happens then there will be nothing that will actually treat this virus.

Q: You're leading the emergency preparedness measures for the Vancouver Olympics. What are the risks involved?

A: We've always made plans for making sure that we could detect if there was an issue coming in the athletes' village, for example, or among spectators, and that we could provide immunization for the volunteers, and staff. We've also put in measures to make sure that there are lots of handwashing stations and hand hygiene products. We've been working on messages for when to do if people get signs of influenza. The athletes and their medical teams know the critical influenza can have on their ability to participate, so there's a very high rate of vaccination. We expect it to be the same this year.

Q: There really is no escaping bacteria or bugs. Is there any trade in the old notion that eating a few grams-a-day washed fruit is good to build up your immune system?

A: I don't think it's good to eat dirt.

Q: You say organic doesn't mean bug-free that it may be better than non-organic?

A: Most of the pesticide agents and fertilizers that we used in organic farming are natural, which in most cases means nutrient. It's really important, with organic—especially with organic produce—to make sure that you wash it carefully.

Q: How can sports fans spread infection?

A: This is about an antibiotic-resistant infection called methicillin-resistant *Staph aureus*. There's a community-associated strain of this bug that can cause skin infections. There was a professional football team where a member of the players had scrapes on their skin from the Associated Press were infected with this strain of CA-MRSA, and they had passed it on to others by shaking wheel-pump handles and towels. So it's important to cover up wounds and not to share equipment.

Q: And the product testing machine at the grocery store?

A: Legionella causes a type of severe pneumonia called Legionnaires' disease. It is a bug that has adapted to our urban water systems and can grow in water systems. Legionella has gotten into some of the misting systems in grocery stores. For most of us, we breathe in a lot of the bug, and our immune systems are able to fight that off. But for some people, if they get a high dose or their immune system are compromised, they can get very sick.

Q: You mentioned not sharing or wearing clothes before a pedicure. Or if you're having

bad pedicure, get the pedicure first. Why?

A: The thing about pedicures is you tend to soak your feet in a water bath first and there have been occasions where that water has been contaminated with actual bacteria that usually don't cause a problem. But if you just shaved or waxed your legs you have any little cuts around the leg follicles and those can get infected.

Q: You've hosted SARS in Toronto, H5N1 in Uganda. What impact did that have on you?

A: Probably the first is that there's no element of fear around infectious diseases, particularly with an epidemic. During that fear is just in appearance as carrying the infection. The second thing is that every time there is an outbreak they inevitably have people involved in stopping it. I've always been amazed by other health care professionals who put their lives on the line.



The reaction that we had at first to H1N1 probably engendered fear that's now, we realize, unwarranted'

Q: How do you stay motivated?

A: The reason I never get what I'm doing seems like a waste of time, and I get tired with a number of things. I will 10:00, so I will sleep out for a thank of days. I'm something that I don't have, and become interested. I learned my lesson, that's for sure.

Q: What else do you do?

A: I will probably never come from a market that had been just a small business. I was a huge difference. It can make you ill. ■

WHAT WILL THEY RUN ON NOW?

Stimulus spending didn't exactly spark the recovery, writes JOHN GEDDES, leaving the Harper government in a bit of a bind

Predicting the defining issue of a federal campaign is notoriously tricky. Old political hands will tell you decisions always end up running on the question of leadership. But leaders need something to talk about—that's why they invented platform. A well-crafted one can sometimes set the agenda, the way Stephen Harper managed to do in his last two campaigns with a way-to-understand pledges aimed at middle-income voters. Other factors beyond a politician's control also come into play for the fresh memory of the spectacular scandal blizzard Paul Martin's last run as Liberal leader. Perhaps the only time in the last 20 years that concern is thought to be obvious going to a election the economy is in the tank.

Now, though, with speculation about a fall election heating up, even the formerly self-set that this campaign would be all about the recession looks uncertain. Only five months ago, just about everybody in Ottawa's political set thought Harper had slipped under the sea by winning last fall's election, just before Canadians realized that the financial meltdown of 2008 was the prelude to a full-blown recession. But with only a minority, there was no way he could expect having to run this year or next as how he Tories managed through the slump.

Or could he? Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff spelling out exactly what he wants voters to have their own choice of "The big question," Ignatieff said in his campaign for funds at a summer's end meeting in his

bury, Ont., "Is '09 to be best placed to lead Canada into the economy of tomorrow?"

That's a fair cry from, say, "Who can best lead Canada out of this current economic mess?"

Or, "Who screwed things up here in the first place?" The clear implication of Ignatieff's ballot question is that Liberals no longer believe voters can be counted on to punish Harper for leading Canada into hard times. History suggests that is an unusual occasion. After all, Brian Mulroney's landslide Tory win in 1984 came on the heels of the painful 1981-83 recession, and Jean Chrétien's landslide win of the Conservatives in 1993 followed the 1990-1992 economic downturn. In fact, every recession since 1960 has been followed by the party in power either being re-elected or coming to power or thrown out altogether. Ignatieff's decision to run on his issues for the future, rather than Harper's handling of the present, suggests Liberals believe that the political realizations of the 2009 recession are difficult.

And they might be onto something there. Don Drummond, TD Bank Financial Group's chief economist, and a former long-term Liberal Prime minister, sees a certain relief over the fact the recession didn't pack quite the wallop doorkeepers had predicted. In terms of the numbers themselves, Drummond told Maclean's this year's slump turned out to be "a garden variety deep recession—a little higher than the early '80s and a bit deeper than the early '90s." Those two recessions



also cost the parties and policy enough to rule through them as clearly. The difference now is that many Canadians were lulled if for worse. "If you put aside the numbers, there were many, many who were expecting Armageddon—all the inferences to the return of Great Depression," Drummond says. "So I would say that on most aspects it turned out to be lighter than many had feared."

But judging the recession less severe than the horrific worst case scenarios is not the same as ordering the Tories shut idly watching through it. Members of the government's growth mission to the summit group in 2008 will blazer Harper declared during last fall's campaign that the danger of a recession had already passed. After winning the election, the Tories tabled an economic update that dived down a pessimistic led and warned—no longer that proved laughable when Finance Minister Jim Flaherty had to switch this year to projecting a \$90 billion

THE AVAILABLE DATA shows no gain of spending on new construction in the three months leading up to the easing of the recession.

deficit. The Tories signed on to coordinated international emergency assistance—low interest rates, steps to spur bank lending, and stimulus spending—widely criticized with easing and shortening what might have been a much more severe downturn.

That does not mean, however, that the Conservatives will be able to run on a convincing case that their centrepiece program—infrastructure spending—did the trick. Pivoted by all the opposition parties, supported by an uncontested consensus, the Tories rolled a \$12-billion infrastructure program over two years at the expense of their recovery plan. The government won't release final analysis of that plan's progress until a report slated for release late this month. But the last publicly available data shows no gain of government spending on actual new construction

in the three months leading up to the easing of the recession over the summer.

Those numbers are backed away in so-called national accounts data released by Statistics Canada late last month. Spending in April, May and June by all levels of government on buildings like schools, hospitals and office towers rose by 3.4 per cent to about \$4.5 billion, about half the rate of increase in the same period a year earlier. And spending in the same spring quarter on engineering projects like bridges, roads and sewers increased 1.8 per cent to \$6.6 billion, a significant jump, but again well below the 7.4 per cent rise in the same quarter of 2008.

In other words, government spending on infrastructure in the spring after Flaherty announced his big stimulus push, just before the quarter got the summer recovery, didn't noticeably surge at all. Nothing billions out the door is hard to do. Drummond wasn't re-

joined. "People selectively choose to ignore the history," he said. "We have always had the experience that fiscal stimulus has kicked in later than people would have hoped for. If you go back to the mid-1980s, we did exactly the same thing. When the money started to flow, the economy had started to recover on its own."

He might much more credit for the recovery now underway to monetary policy, not just low interest rates, but also the "whole arsenal" of steps taken internationally to make sure banks lending didn't dry throat. That doesn't mean, he adds, that Ottawas should cancel the remaining bulk of its planned stimulus spending, which will translate into real construction work through the rest of this year and well into 2010. "As long as it's sensible," Drummond said, "we need it at any rate."

Flaherty is determined to push ahead with the spending. "We agreed that we are not out



WITNESSES say they saw Sheppard fall off Breynd's car, resulting in his death. It's still to be determined whether Breynd was at fault

A TRAGIC ENCOUNTER

How the lives of two men were destroyed by a cruel twist of fate
BY JONATHAN GATROUSE
AND CHARLIE GELLES

Toronto's "Mink Mile" was dinged for good. A two-block stretch of Bloor Street West populated with the kind of high-end retailers—Cartier, Prada, Chanel, Tiffany—whose imposing prices usually limit the foot traffic to window shopping. Close to several luxury hotels and fine restaurants, it's a favoured hunting ground for paparazzi when the like-fabled millionaires town. But since the night of Aug. 31, a rare and far grimmer attraction has emerged: a grey Canada Post mail truck, its rear end a mosaic of cheap flowers surrounded by human legs. Scrawled across the sides and hand-written Post-it notes cover the

sides and top. Expressions of sympathy and anger at the violent death of Darcy Alan Sheppard, a 33-year-old bike courier. "S.L.P. A helluva guy today," reads one. "Hate that he got lost of bike lanes," says another. The accident, an all-out emotion-laden fight between a cyclist and a motorist that somehow escalated into a confrontation that saw Sheppard dying in the car as it bobbed him against trees, lampposts and finally the roadbed, before he fell into the road and was run over, was shocking enough. But the fact that the driver was Ontario's former attorney general, Michael Breynd, coloured all the harder to comprehend. The 43-year-old, married, six-foot, six-inch, balding politician and perhaps future prime minister, has been charged with criminal negligence and dangerous operation of a motor vehicle causing death, and faces a maximum penalty of life in prison. And the question of whether the killer of the seemingly a guilty of an avoidable accident or not, or him

self a victim of violence attack at the hands of the cyclist, is the debate consuming the city, sparking angry, traffic-blocking protests by bike advocates, motorcycle-aided party cheer, and an all-out media frenzy. Only fact—or a little healthy imagination—could have brought such a disparate pair together. A troubled young man who lived as society's margin man with a strong power broker on a patch of Canada's richest real estate. Two very different stories, one tragic, real, and one ending that has yet to be written. "He came out of nowhere."

That time when reconciliation has been applied to many an ill-fated cyclist, and if Michael Breynd's name is spoken near words: Alan Sheppard was a living, spunky Canada's invisible underdog, a stoic man with little in the

FIGURES AFTER leaving Matty Bailey (top left), Sheppard was dead, who lay on a stretcher on the "Mink Mile" (bottom right)

way of family bounties between crisis, struggling to gain his own weaknesses in gun control at his world. Friends spoke of him turning things around. But the night he died it all too well into the broader picture of his history, he had drunk his way out of his girlfriend's good grace. Then, as his way out for her, he'd had a run in with the police, an attack a scene that ended with the cops ordering him out of the way to move along.

The exchange has become a peg of terms for those trying to come to terms with Sheppard's death. On the night of the death, Sheppard was drunk, he'd fallen off his bike just before the two officers arrived at the scene. In a courtrooms' version, Sheppard's girlfriend, Matty Bailey, said the 33-year-old cyclist was drunk and had a run in with the police, an attack a scene that ended with the cops ordering him out of the way to move along. She says he was drunk, he'd fallen off his bike just before the two officers arrived at the scene. In a courtrooms' version, Sheppard's girlfriend, Matty Bailey, said the 33-year-old cyclist was drunk and had a run in with the police, an attack a scene that ended with the cops ordering him out of the way to move along.

Yet Sheppard's record with law enforcement officials suggests he might have been just as pleased to take himself away. With 60 outstanding arrest warrants in his home province of Alberta, he would hardly have considered a late arrival town with two cops in tow, just one option. The police, far from patting him on the back, were told to ride—and their own search for him was far from a waste of time. "He's a troublemaker," says Breynd's lawyer, "he's a troublemaker." "We're Toronto police, not Toronto cops," snapped Sgt. Tim Kinnear, a police officer, in an interview. "What was the occasion for his arrest?" he asked. Sheppard's history with the police, probably drunk and almost certainly angry, was really the end of his life. A messy from the Edmonton area, he was the kind of an alcoholic model and was quickly placed in foster care. As a teenager, he was adopted by a family only to find himself back on the street a few years later, says friends. A charismatic youth with a quick wit and a piercing gaze, he had no trouble making friends and, later, attracting girls. But drug and alcohol addiction dragged him all the way, and responsibility was never his forte. By the time he met Bailey, Sheppard had gathered four



THE DEBATE IS CONSUMING THE CITY, SPARKING ANGRY PROTESTS, INCREDULOUS CHATTER AND AN ALL-OUT MEDIA FRENZY

children he never supported and whom most of his contacts only occasionally. The rest of personal destruction has made him a difficult figure for some people to know. "Trudy Schindler, the great-grandmother of Sheppard's young girl, admits the 'dude's still my hero' when he heard of his death. Yet her granddaughter, who, when Schindler had raised herself, and her house had crumbled at him, noting that he'd called her last May to ask about his son. It was the first time he'd expressed interest in the child, she said, adding, "I'd never intended for us to lose touch."

The two had met in 2002 while Jodie was venturing at a bar in the mountain town of Hinton, Alta., where Sheppard was working as a bike courier. They struck up a relationship and soon became heavy drug users. Jodie, who works in the Edmonton area, is now a supply chain manager at Edmonton. "We had all just lived every day for every day," she says. A few months ago, in May 2004, Jodie came back to Hinton broke and six months pregnant.

"We said that the kids to go out of there, and I'm glad we did," says Trudy, 70. "She came home with nothing more than a pair of socks and underwear and the clothes on her back. I don't have a good word to say about her."

It was during their time in Alberta that Sheppard allegedly struck upon a scheme to raise money, trading shares that he made out to himself and others called. The Alberta securities board and property crimes related mainly to the scam. Initially, they were not serious enough for authorities at that province to have him sent home (warnings for minor offences are typically unenforceable a policy within the area where they occurred). Police want a suspect sent out from their province, they have to pick up the tab for travel.

In Toronto, Sheppard struggled to find his address, says Jodie's friend, setting out to run things around only after she'd gone. A lifelong cycling enthusiast, he found work on the road bike lanes toward downtown Toronto, among the hundreds of thousands of bike messengers. It was a good

FROM TOP: SHEPPARD'S GIRLFRIEND, MATTY BAILEY; A BICYCLE COURIER; A BICYCLE COURIER; A BICYCLE COURIER

fit. Sheppard's in-state toughness earned him respect. No one judged his bawdiness for his story. "The guy was genuinely trying," says John Martin, a veteran owner who got to know Sheppard on the job. "He was struggling against a lot more crap than a lot of people have to deal with as he did, and he was falling down those times to rise. But he was a pleasant, polite, well-mannered guy. I know for a fact he brought customers to his company because of that."

Just then, Sheppard's life took another positive turn when he got into Mike Bailey's world school kicked from education whom he'd long considered a hindrance. The two got engaged, and he seemed to be established. But Sheppard's drinking soon reared its head, and the pair put off their nuptials indefinitely. "I was actually going to propose to get insight on his disorder," Bailey recalls. On the night he was killed, Sheppard had fallen off the wagon following an eight-day stretch of sobriety, showing up at Bailey's door and crashing in her bedroom. He was incoherent when he woke, she says, and he started bleeding out on the rug. "I didn't want to go," says Bailey. "But he was upstairs, and I couldn't really force him to do anything that time. I just had to let him go."

For such a high-flying couple, it was a decidedly low-key wedding. Michael Bryant and his wife, Susan Alexander, were not in the town on Aug. 31 to celebrate their 13th wedding anniversary, but they made each other's list. They grabbed a couple of beers and had some of a shabby lunch in Toronto's Little Italy. Then they drove their black Stratus convertible across the downtown to the neighbourhood known as the Beach, and took a romantic sunset stroll along Lake Ontario. At around 9 p.m., they made one final stop for bubble tea at a family-run Greek pizzeria shop on the Danforth. Afterwards, they started back toward their mothers-in-law, along construction started Billy Street, top down on a warm late-summer night.

Before his fateful encounter with Allen Sheppard, Bryant's future prospects seemed limitless. At 43, he had recently abandoned an 11-year career in provincial politics, where he served as Ontario's attorney general, minister of Aboriginal affairs, and, more recently, minister of economic development, for a gig as head of Invest in Toronto, the city's new business-boosting agency. A midwest leg, but neither would part him in touch with all sorts of powerful donors, and all he wanted to do for what many assumed was coming home as a run at the Ontario Liberal leadership, or perhaps a stretch in federal politics.

No one has ever accused Bryant of lacking ambition. He seemed to be off to the races with

a stellar overseas career. The son of a lawyer and former mayor of Esquimalt, B.C., he moved out after undergrad in the late 1980s to work at Ogilvy & Mather, finishing out the top of his dad. He did an LL.M. at Harvard on a Fulbright scholarship, writing his thesis on conflict between governments and native groups, and went on to teach at King's College London, and the University of Toronto. He and Susan, now one of the country's top interior designers, met while they were both clerking at the Supreme Court Canada. "It was love at first sight for me," Bryant said in 2004. "It took her a few more months to see the wisdom of our coupling." The pair now

enjoy secure passive retirement on school for killer Earl's media.

If one had to choose an annual to describe Bryant, a banner runner might be the best fit. He is associated for his role in place wins (just days before the Bloor Street murder, he was showing off his jumbo green Paul Smith sweater and matching bowtie to a party with the founder of *Time* Inc. North Toronto), and a long-time friend, says he was appalled by the tragedy, and (although he is not one to back down from a challenge) a boxer since the age of 16, Bryant still trains, although he no longer fights competitively. "I'd hate any good-fella," says Adrian Todorov, a Toronto boxing coach who guided



BRYANT WAS REMOVED TO BE CONSIDERING RUN AT THE ONTARIO LIBERAL LEADERSHIP



Lennox Lewis to a gold medal at the 1996 Summer Olympics, and trained Bryant for a number of years. "But he's very cool, very calm. Somebody with his body structure couldn't be very aggressive. He's about 140 lb. (63 kilograms) and he's got a long reach. Last December, he was charged with sexual assault, forcible confinement, threatening death and assault after a 21-year-old woman he had been training contacted to police. He's currently free on bail."

But Bryant's unbridled energy and high media profile—the Queen's Park press gallery once jokingly gave him the order: spread around his propensity to "rub up" against them—started to be viewed with suspicion in some quarters. In 2007, McGuinty shuffled him to Niagara Falls, a move widely perceived as a demotion, although Bryant was looking for the books on the township after media handling of events in local dispute in California. And five decades to Economic Development in 2005 came under scrutiny that he was ducking off to golf for years. When Bryant left government this past May, he was widely given a shout from the top speech on the economy—his welcome had pretty much worn out. "There's no doubt his style chafed a lot of people the wrong way,"

says a senior Ontario Liberal, comparing Bryant to former Education Minister Spencer "The Rat" Armstrong. "The more you hear you loved him, if not, you hated him."

But whatever political ill will existed, among Bryant's friends and acquaintances there is almost universal sympathy for the person he now finds himself in. Toronto politician, the founder of *Time* Inc. North Toronto, and a long-time friend, says he was appalled by the tragedy, and (although he is not one to back down from a challenge) a boxer since the age of 16, Bryant still trains, although he no longer fights competitively. "I'd hate any good-fella," says Adrian Todorov, a Toronto boxing coach who guided



IF SHEPPARD'S FINGERPRINTS ARE ON THE WHEEL, BRYANT MAY NOT EVEN GO TO TRIAL

than 15 years. "They're a lovely couple. Very smart and dedicated to their kids. And he's very caring person."

Politicians say he is sure there must be more to the story. Appearance can be deceiving. The Daily Star columnist, for example, was used, purchased for just \$5,000. Politicians remember Bryant proudly showed it off after a dinner on College Street last summer. "It was pretty cool," he says proudly. "Such a beautiful car for that kind of money."

If Sheppard was in a poor frame of mind when he left Bailey's neighbourhood, he was probably ready to stop by the time he made one down Bloor Street near King, past the steps of St. Nicholas. He'd already developed a short fuse when it came to dealing with motorists, having been blamed years earlier for a side-swipe in line. Fellow motorists who attended a memorial service last weekend in Toronto recalled him as an arrogant "butter" at cars.

Security camera footage suggests the confrontation began after Bryant's car clipped Sheppard's rear tire. What would have been the reason that allowed my own behaviour (as

most accurately, Italy Bryant's version will be). But a number of witnesses swear that for the horrific accident that followed, Sheppard got off his bike and walked back to the car, several paces, drawing his backpack onto his head. He yelled angrily and then—just as the convertible stopped and tried to speed away—he grabbed onto the driver's rear tire. One man, 37-year-old Raju Rajadurai, recalled Sheppard being dragged down the street, spears flying off his cycling shoes as he sat straddled across the pavement.

Within seconds, the car had swung into the oncoming lane—overpass post marks marked along the yellow line near a construction site.



Several witnesses described a bumping up on the sidewalk of the driver was deliberately trying to scrape the man off the side of his vehicle. "There were trees and pines and newspaper boxes. The tires were screeching," witness Jack Harlan told the Toronto Star. "Suddenly it was clear that who ever was dragging on the side of the car was in mortal danger."

On the way to the hospital, Sheppard was attacking the driver, swinging his grabbed hold of the steering wheel, sending the car out of control.

Witnesses took minutes to help hold the car critical to Bryant's future. If the former attorney general was being attacked, or even left threatened, a court may well find his reasons proportioned, even if ultimately resulted in the death of Allen Sheppard, says Jonathan Rosenthal, a prominent Toronto defence lawyer. "The Crown will have to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Bryant was negligent, and I think they're going to have a very hard time. We know that the guy was drunk, and being charged, and was perhaps behaving very angrily." Indeed, if the police forensic investigation were to find Sheppard's fingerprints on the steering wheel, Rosenthal says he doubts the matter will ever go to trial.

Suffice to say, Bryant and his allies are

already working to shape perceptions about the tragedy and its principal players. He has produced his own version, two days after being charged, by David Martin, a Toronto lawyer. He's already defended lawyer most recently in the case for getting former MPP, senior David Frost acquitted on charges of sexually exploiting young hockey players. Bryant also retained *Navigator* Inc., a public relations firm former prime minister Brian Mulroney employed during the Clinton inquiry.

The latter move raised eyebrows even among some of Bryant's former political allies, who saw it as an attempt at self-serving. "Using Mulroney's name is a very over-the-top move," said one Liberal who knows Bryant. "Not even." But this already paid-for disavowal instead of carrying blame, Bryant appeared shaken and that in a period not his first session before the cameras, his statements reflected sympathy to Sheppard's family with a sideways glance at his misery.

The effort was both baffling and alarming, and finally but surely a witness account of the confrontation emerged—news coverage drilled in Bryant's future. A steady drip of details from Sheppard's autopsy paid the price. Now did we see plans from Sheppard's movements before the crash. Our city paper published details of his evening with Alexander and the sympathetic headline: "Battered evening, and the drive home."

Whether that brings up all the enough to rescue Bryant's political career and/or career. More than a mere matter of traffic safety, Bryant's death seemed to stir some deep-rooted sense of unfairness, giving the cycling protest an undercurrent of social justice. "It's symbolic because you can't get anybody at a higher status than Bryant," said Sheppard, a 14-year old cyclist remember who started a rally near the site of the incident, and added to get his last name printed. "Allen, well, he was like me—poor guy, much of the history of the hotel in terms of what's broken or success."

Of course, what passes between two angry men on a street can have precious little to do with social justice—not least when they're never met after their ordeal. Given the facts as they now stand, Bryant may well receive exoneration as a criminal court of law. His trial in the court of public opinion has only begun. ■

TORONTO OPENS FIRST BLACK-FOCUSED SCHOOL
Marcus Gernsey said in his own words, "A people without knowledge of its own culture, history or heritage is like a tree without roots." I think it's important for [my son] to know where he is coming from to have a better understanding of where he needs to be." —William Douglas, whose son Tigray Walker, 8, is attending Toronto's first Black-focused school. The publicly funded AlCentric Alternative School officially opened this week.



Library porn incident sparks outcry



Some say using Internet filters in libraries is unconstitutional

BY RAYE KENNELMART • Our libraries are more to be bastions of free thought and unfettered access to information. But at Wherry's patrons in London, Ont., recently learned, that principle proves complicated when child porn is thrown in the mix.

When a 3-year-old London man was found viewing and printing child pornography at the central branch of the London Public Library last month, it kicked off a raucous debate about whether to filter out offensive material. For London councillor Cheryl Miller, the anti-porn filter causes the city to "lose its democratic right to say, 'I don't want to see or hear this kind of material,'" she says. "And as this library, they don't have that right."

But such a move would not be easy. "We did have filters on the computers for a period of time," says David Waininger, city social officer and chairperson of the library board. "Then we received a letter outlining us that the filters were unconstitutional under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms." The filters, Waininger explained, were broad enough that they excluded "legitimate" information about "sexual education or birth control." After a freedom of expression group threatened to sue, the board removed the filters.

For Waininger, the outcry is just a sideshow point on the debate about a library's right to censor books. A few years ago, he says, the same library was home to a "Naziist" battle about whether or not to let a book about Paul Bernhardt—the infamous Canadian serial killer—remain on shelves.

The next step in dealing with the pornography issue is an executive council meeting to discuss what measures should be taken to protect the general public," Waininger says. But for now, he believes the computers will stay filter-free. ■

NASCAR star goes after 'Mr. Boogity'

BY NICHOLAS KOHLER • In 2001, Randy Nicholson, a former model handstander in Woodstock, N.B., and a devoted racing fan, opened a NASCAR memorabilia shop. He eventually decided to call it *Boogity Sports*—wear after the phrase, "Boogity, boogity, boogity, let's go racing, boys!" coined by former American NASCAR champion and TV commentator Darrell Waltrip. For years the store did well, but not long ago, Nicholson received a legal document entitled, of all things, "Darrell Lee Waltrip vs. Randy C. Nicholson." It was, he says, that opening job is a highly unusual racing match. "He had given," Nicholson says, a little rudely. "I didn't."

Sent by an Ottawa law firm representing Waltrip, the letter said Nicholson had infringed upon the race car driver's registered Canadian trademark—"boogity"—and penalties until Sept. 1 to scrub all mention of the word from his appearance. Waltrip's lawyer, Scott Miller of MBM Intellectual Property Law, describes the basic premise of Waltrip's complaint as, "They listen, they're mean, they even started his name in association with 'boogity' because of me."

Nicholson, known locally as "Mr. Boogity," was "a little upset" when told he could sue a multimillionaire to fight (complying with the letter has already cost him \$15,000). Instead, he mounted a media campaign, calling his local radio station and then writing a few antipornographic words about Waltrip to a reporter. "The one comment I wish I had back was when I said, 'I'll have him in front of me I'd cut his head pipe off,'" I regret that."

At the irony of Waltrip, a blue-collar icon, using his deep pockets against a small store owner isn't lost on Nicholson. "What the country feels," NANCAR wouldn't be where it is today," he says. "First don't see the three-piece suit and tie guy at the race. It's the blue collar guy." Deftly with "boogity," he says, "It's not in my dictionary. I don't even know it's a word. I call it a redneck word." "There's no such thing as a free lunch," Nicholson adds. "I've put me out of business. And I think he knows that." ■



Nicholson's use of the 'boogity' word has cost him \$8,000

Who stole Reid's Haida art pieces?

BY BEN MACDONALD • Twelve pieces of stolen artwork by the late Haida artist Bill Reid are back on display at the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology, but questions swirl around the shadowy circumstances of their recovery.



It was one of our largest art heists, but no one has been punished

A multi-jurisdictional hunt involving 10 investigators. The university posted a \$10,000 reward, leading the items would be tracked down for their modest gold value of about \$15,000. Two weeks later, police notified residents in Burnaby and New Westminster, recovering 10 of the items. Three people were arrested, but later released.

That August, the RCMP announced the recovery of the remaining pieces, a gold eagle brooch and a carved apical pipe, missing a broken end. Police won't say where, when or how they were recovered. At the time, an RCMP officer said the theft was the work of an anonymous career criminal from the Vancouver area. But so far they've gone uncaught after pulling off one of the largest Canadian art heists in recent memory.

RCMP Cpl. Anne Lemaire said last week the results of their investigation went to the provincial Crown attorney's office last fall. "We did recommend charges but we're waiting to find out what the Crown's decision is." She said "cash rewards" were paid during the investigation, but no money came from the university. "Our priority was the recovery of the items, and ultimately we were able to get them back." Crown spokesman Neil MacKenzie said the delay is partly due to the complexity of the case. "We still haven't completed our review of all the material." He wouldn't say what charges, if any, may be laid.

The museum reopened in March after previously planned renovations, including an upgraded level of protection. The recovered items aren't likely to disappear again, says UBC spokesman Scott MacLean. "We had very good about the level of security." ■

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HELPING THE REVOLUTION

How a McGill prof helped teach Iran's opposition about non-violent protest
BY MICHAEL PETROU

Papam Akhavan was working in The Hague as a legal adviser to the prosecutor's office of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia when students in his homeland of Iran took to the streets in numbers that had not been seen since the early days of the Islamic Revolution. The July 1999 demonstrations began as peaceful protests against the closing of a reformist newspaper, but when the government responded by sending the Muslim Basij militia to raid assembly centers and throw students off upper-floor balconies, it escalated into a confrontation between the guardians of Iran's theocracy and those who wanted to reform or overthrow it.

Akhavan, whose family left Iran in 1979 and who is now a professor of international law at McGill University, had long believed there was a desire for democratic change in Iran. He said when he frequently discussed how this might come about and when they could do anything about it. But the opposition had to be made nonviolent coming from within Iran, until that July. "We considered to the fact that what we always knew was an underground of dissenters in Iran had finally spoken out," he says. "And from that point onward there was some consideration given to how we can begin to help these people."

A year later, another uprising in another part of the world gave Akhavan hope and direction. In October 2000, a non-violent revolution forced the resignation of Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic, who was subsequently turned over to the tribunal in The Hague. Within less than a year, the man who had brought so much death and destruction to the Balkans was in prison, governing a nation to paving a path and leaving charges of war crimes and genocide in a UN-backed court. Akhavan's author had been fired.

"Nonviolence was once uncatchable," says Akhavan, recalling Milosevic's presence at peace conferences during and after the Bosnian War. "And for me, in some way who had seen him being treated as a head of state, to see him overthrown and then surrender to



Akhavan and his expertise colleagues held workshops on resistance and strategy

The Hague, as an Iranian, it was very inspiring. The two things that came to mind were non-violence resistance and perseverance, accountability. Those were the two pillars."

Thanked Akhavan, who by 2001 was a senior fellow at Yale's law school and genocide studies program, to join with others with an interest in Iran to found the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center the following year. The institution added notes to document human rights abuses in Iran and to informing Iran's justice about international human rights law, eventually, holding those responsible for abuses in Iran to account. It has received funding from private and government sources, including the U.S. State Department, the U.S. and Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs.

Among Akhavan's colleagues who founded the documentation center was Ibrahim Alami, a professor in Yale's faculty of education who left Iran in 1982 at the age of 21. "Some of my young friends in those days were excited and filled by the Revolutionary Guards," he said in an interview with Maclean's, referring to the branch of Iran's military that is most

dedicated to preserving the Islamic Revolution. "I never forgot that. I told friends behind. I never forgot that I had some of my best memories from my younger years in Iran. And I always felt that democracy and respect for human rights are the way to go."

Ahmad was a student leader of non-violent resistance, particularly the idea of Gholi Sharp, a political scientist and founder of the Albert Einstein Institute, which studies and promotes the use of non-violent action to advance democracy. For several years in the early 1980s, using his own money, Ahmadi had organized workshops on non-violent resistance for hundreds of Iranian democratic activists at locations outside Iran where Iranian could travel without raising suspicion.

"My vision was always that in Iran people are going to want to change this regime," he says. "And I believed that the way to assassinate your chances of reaching democracy and respect for human rights is of your revolution is non-violence. So my vision was that you train young people in non-violent strategy and tactics, and they graduate to the office in spreadsheets, and you have a young generation

non-violence as a means of social change. The vision had teaching, training and curriculum that Ahmadi thought were appropriate for his goals in Iran, and was willing to fund similar workshops. They decided to start one in Dubai, where Iranians can travel without visas and where hundreds of thousands of them live already—meaning that the activists from Iran would be difficult to detect.

This time, however, the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center held training sessions as well. Papam Akhavan helped organize the event and attended as an instructor.

The workshops took place in the spring of 2000. About 20 Iranians came, split into groups of four or five, kept separate from each other and lodged at different hotels. If one group's cover was blown, the organizers didn't want the other attendees to be implicated. "By nature, you cannot tell people what to do," says Akhavan, who asked about

groups and of working diagrams and symbols. He saw examples of this during the protests that began in Iran this summer after the June 12 presidential election, which most observers believe was rigged in favor of incumbent hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Demonstrators adopted green as the color of their revolution, and even wrote (as chanted) "God is great" from their rooftops at night, echoing the popular slogan of the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

"These things were discussed," says Akhavan, when asked if such tactics were born in Dubai. "But I would not say that there were. It was decided. I don't want to suggest that were it not for this series of seminars, that would never have happened."

Akhavan, like Ahmadi, a first-hand witness but cautious when talking about the workshops in Dubai. On the one hand, he feels they made a difference, either in the minds of the attendees. "Those who were present were very clearly inspired," he says. "To understand that what they did in 1999 contained the seeds of something much greater—that nonviolence, I think, was very important. And for them to understand that this Iran was needed in other countries, that Iran is just another authoritarian state, and people have dealt with worse tyrannies, in South Africa, in Chile, in Argentina—that gives people moral strength and hope."

On the other hand, the response of the Iranian government to this summer's uprising has been to describe the protesters as stooges of foreign powers intent on carrying out a "colorful coup." As more evidence emerges detailing the abuse inflicted on detained Iranian dissidents, Akhavan is loath to say anything that might be twisted to fit the official Iranian narrative of the uprising.

"It is interesting to say that the three million people who participated in the streets of Tehran, and the thousands who have been detained in the face of arrests, protests, and rape, are all part of some foreign conspiracy," he says. "What the regime is doing is to denigrate a genuine indigenous struggle for democracy as a foreign conspiracy, and consider anyone those who are asking for human rights is those at the forefront of the struggle in Iran who are making the real sacrifices, showing by their actions how desperate they are for change. All we're doing from abroad is



The July 1999 student protest (top), and a demonstration after this summer's election

what was taught at the workshops. "You can just put your ideas into their minds and let them decide how to adapt it to their circumstances." Nonviolence, he says, was part of the workshops. "Beyond making a list of issues, you have to anticipate how the government is going to respond, how you're going to evade these measures," he says.

An example, Akhavan said, the experience of solidarity among different opposition



PRANCE, UP WITH ABOU MOHRE
Despite nothing's more French than a peck on each cheek for hello—yet now students will have to clowd-hug. Prancing in white kaftans, California Mayor Hilarie Tang has ordered that school children refrain from kissing, suggesting the past dance be replaced by what she calls a traditional Aborigine pat-down from America. Kissing is one-headed hello for those who miss kisses, paper hearts kept in disco boxes can be buzz-buted to friends instead.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT LEMOVIC
FARHANG JAZAYERI/AP, BETTY HAZEL

supporting them and giving them knowledge and skills and encouragement."

Of the 10 or so Iranian who attended the 2007 workshops in Dubai, all returned safely to Iran, with the exception of one group, which consisted of the wife, daughter, nephew, and friend of prominent Iranian reformer and prisoners' rights advocate Esmatollah Baghi, who has spent years in jail because of his activism over the past decade. Baghi was not able to go to Dubai because Iranian authorities held his passport.

Back in Iran, at least one member of this group chose not to hide their attendance at the workshops, for almost year this brought no repercussions. But by 2006 Mahmoud Akhondnabi had replaced reformist Mehdi Karubi as president, which cast a chill over reformer groups in Iran. And in February of this year, U.S. Secretary of State Condeleeza Rice asked the Senate for \$75 million to promote democracy and human rights in Iran. Talk of regime change was back in the air. All four members of Baghi's group who went to Dubai were arrested.

Arrested that time, the Washington Post interviewed Baghi about the conference. He flatly said, with his wife and daughter in jail and his young sons, Baghi condemned the whole operation.

Akshad held at least one more workshop for Iranian dissidents but has now stopped. Most of his workshop material and curricula are online and transferred into Farsi. The material has been downloaded, he says, tens of thousands of times from inside Iran. Akshad, from his current post at McGill, remains active on the board of the U.S. Human Rights Documentation Center and continues to

'IT IS LUDICROUS TO SAY THAT THE MILLIONS WHO POURED INTO THE STREETS WERE ALL FOREIGN PAWNS'

advocate for Iranian democracy. The Iranian government has denounced him as a CIA agent. But one still believes that a peaceful transition to democracy is possible in Iran.

The demonstrations that shook Iran this summer were suppressed with overwhelming force. In recent weeks, as reports have emerged detailing the brutality suffered by protesters in detention, leading clerics and other members of Iran's establishment have

voiced their outrage. When the acid burned body of Saeedeh Pourghaybi was released to her family, 10 days after she was arrested for shouting "God is great!" and "Down with the dictator!" from her rooftop, defiant opposition candidate and former prime minister Mir Hossein Mousavi attended her funeral. There are swift lions running through the country's political life that weren't visible before the June 14 election.

Akshad sees two big forces in Iran that he says will shape the way Iranian politics develop in the years ahead. One is the increasing power of the Revolutionary Guards, who are punishing Islamic Republic of Iran closer to a traditional military dictatorship than a democracy. The second factor is the growing opposition between reformists, who believe that democracy and respect for human rights can be developed within Iran's existing political system, and revolutionaries who believe the system itself must be changed.

Previously, the former were tolerated while the latter were crushed. But this summer, even those who simply wanted the votes they cast in an election to be counted fairly faced detention, beatings, and rape. It also pushed reformists and revolutionaries together and increased the likelihood of more widespread protest against the regime in the future. ■

A deadly place to be a journalist

BY RAYE URBAN — Last week, there was yet another reminder that journalists are in front seats in Russia. Media outlets around the world were reporting that the *Asian Star* newspaper, which were missing for more than two weeks in early August, might have been transporting Russian spy units across its routes to Iran. But a Russian journalist who reported those claims was forced to flee his country, fearing repercussions.

Michail Vostokov, editor of the online *Novosti* Bulletin Serbiak, claimed he'd received a phone call from "unknown people" after publicly condemning Russian officials.



Russian journalist Vostokov says 'unknown people' told him to flee

It's just further proof, says Ivan Prigovoi, Jilard, secretary general of Public-based Reporters State Freedom (RSF), that "it's not safe to be a journalist in Russia."

Indeed, Russia ranks as one of the deadliest countries in the world for reporting journalists, only Iraq and Algeria are more dangerous, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists. On RSF's Press Freedom Index, Russia ranked 154 of 171 countries in 2007, placing a slightly behind Sudan.

Unlike in more repressive countries like Burma, "there are no investigations or reports in Russia," Jilard says. "It's difficult for them to express their views freely." Large media companies tend to be easy with governments, he says, while smaller groups have less access. In the United States, according to Maria Dymek, associate professor at the University of Western Ontario, freedom of the press has only gotten worse under Vladimir Putin.

Yet there is some cause for optimism. Last week, Russia's Supreme Court ordered prison sentences to be a new investigation into the murder of Anna Politkovskaya, an independent investigative journalist gunned down in her Moscow apartment building in 2006. This is cause for hope, Jilard believes. Still, he remains realistic about what will be uncovered. "Maybe someday they'll find the murderer," Jilard says. "But I'm not sure we'll ever find the one who paid for the killing." ■

France's hot summer of labour unrest

BY JULIEN RUSSELL ROBERT — More than one century ago, Alexis de Tocqueville described his much-loved country of France as "the most brilliant and the most dangerous nation in Europe and the best qualified in turn to become an object of admiration, hatred, pity or fear but never indifference." Indeed, as other Western democracies have moved along quietly this summer, quickly moving from the economic crisis, a quick succession France has shocked, surprised and bemused. Over the past few months, there has been an explosion in labour militancy, marking a significant departure in the already quite relaxed attitudes towards the country's trade unions and the French government.

In the spring, employees from at least eight companies laid-off executives, de-motivated executives such as better jobs, higher pay and better benefits. In July, workers at New Fabrics, a bankrupt car-parts plant, and at Nord Networks, the wireless telecommunications company, threatened to explode. But it was in their thousands of employees that it was made demands for a better working conditions. And most recently, angry truck drivers, discontent about redundancy money, vowed to protest more than 5,000 trucks of some products into the Seine River.

While all these threats have been lifted, sleep and unrestful problems remain. Top Jobs Lay, an associate professor of political science at the University of California, Berkeley, says "There isn't a tradition of English and corporate management, but there is a tradition of unions having a lot of expectations that the state will take care of them." But as a time of global recession, the hands of the state—not to mention those of financially besieged corporations—are tied. And that may mean that growing economic pain continues to be an ever more visible presence part of France's labour relations landscape. As one union representative said to Britain's *Guardian*, "People are desperate. Movement is going to get only more violent, more violent." ■

Prostitutes overrun a Spanish icon



Russell's famous Las Ramblas is becoming too noisy for tourists

BY RACHEL HENDELSON — On Barcelona's Las Ramblas—the bustling thoroughfare known for its flower vendors, during breakfast at the 194,000 vehicles a day traffic—there are plenty of fodder for photos. But the images that recently surfaced of prostitutes serving men part of the strip's iconic market are not the stuff of postcards. The photographs, published in the Spanish newspaper *El País*, have drawn attention to Las Ramblas' underbelly. As one commentator recently told the *Times*, "There are more prostitutes than there are people who don't want their children going back to school."

For so long, tourists have looked to the picturesque strip that connects the city's center with the old harbor, the street has had a dark underbelly. In 1907, Public Peace Prostitution from a brothel on nearby Avenida Sureda in his painting *Las Ramblas de la noche*. By night, it has never been without its share of drug dealers or drunken revellers in the area.

But critics say the balance has tipped too far toward the tourist. Las Ramblas is now frequented by pickpockets, trawled are warned to hold their purses tightly. Even before the sex photos surfaced, Las Ramblas the newspaper observed that it was "the most notorious of cities, of a bad city."

As a result, it seems, the country's benign tourism laws. The exploitation of women is banned but prostitution itself is not, making Spain an ideal choice for gangs looking to profit from pimping out illegal immigrants.

In recent days, government officials have been scrambling to restore order, with Barcelona Mayor Jordi Bosch calling for a ban on prostitution in the city center. But others say the proposal is an overreaction. They argue that legislation—not repression—what's needed to keep long dead souls off the street. ■

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AGE MATTERS: A new study shows workers 55 and over will account for a stunning 93 per cent of U.S. labour force growth by 2018.

GENERATION WAR

Who's hit hardest by the recession: young workers or the old?

BY RACHEL MEINLEDER • Teaching has never held the promise of riches, but it's always been thought of as a safe career choice—and with good reason. Aside from full-time thrust on creative persons, it's a profession with a built-in fact on the door: the supply line. In any profession awaiting a long-term contract, substitute teaching is a way to cut your teeth, and pay the bills. Or at least it used to be. These days an influx of returns on the supply-side baby boomers supplies teaching positions with part-time workweeks that new grads are increasingly outpacing with returns. The invasion of so-called “double dipper” has created a palpable resentment among new teachers, says Jerry Weisleder, spokesman for the Toronto Substitutes Teachers' Action Caucus. “They might get their name on the list, but they're not going to be called for months, if ever,” he says. In Burnaby, B.C., the teachers' union vice president Marianne Neill observed last year that thanks to double dipping, “some of our members are living in poverty.” Though returns began flooding the supply line before the recession, tough economic times have dampened the usual influx of young new young people, says Weisleder. “The Canadian dream is being delayed.”

Their circumstances may be unique, but new teachers are not the only ones with an

axe to grind. This summer, average unemployment for students aged 15 to 24 hit nearly 20 per cent—the second highest rate since 1973, when Statistics Canada first began collecting unemployment data. And many of those who managed to obtain entry-level positions before the crash have since been shown the door. This June, the year-over-year increase in the number of youths receiving Employment Insurance increased a staggering 100 per cent. At the same time, those aged 55 and over are awaiting the workforce with renewed vigour, while the economy has not budged. In fact, those older workers saw an increase in employment of five per cent. And it's not going to change soon: a recent Pew Research Center study showed that, from 2006 to 2016, workers over the age of 55 will account for a stunning 93 per cent of labour force growth in the U.S. And the Greater Work-Fit Policy now reports that 47 per cent of American boomers see themselves as being “mid-career.”

Boomers, though, are not without their own plight. The fear that prompting many older workers to hold on to their jobs longer or return for another bid at the race is a very real. Though they're less likely to be laid off, as University of Toronto economics professor Ansgar Sorensen points out, “those who have had off-balance large negative consequences” than their younger counterparts. They are typically out of work for longer (last year in the U.S., those aged 45 and over spent 22 weeks looking for a job after being laid off, younger workers spent 16 weeks), and upon their

return, are often forced to take significant cuts to their salaries and medical aid. Along with their economic portfolios decimated, they are coming to grips with the fact that they may never return.

Both groups feel hardest done by. Figures aren't available for Canada, but in the U.S., age-related discrimination complaints shot up 30 per cent from 2007 to 2008. At the same time, in a recent study, younger workers are frustrated at often being the first to go, while boomers enjoy the protection of seniority as the percentage of their retirement packages. For the youngsters and older workers, as the result of the recession and unemployment, a sense that who remains employed is now gone. The recession has amplified the racial push and pull between generations. It's a dynamic that is subtly playing out in workplaces across the country.

Amunda Peters, 23, graduated in June with a bachelor's degree in math. She wants to become an actuary (a postgraduate choice given the current economic situation). She's sent out countless resumes, and “no one calls back,” she says. Jane, older workers may not have their parents to fall back on, says Peters. “But they have the experience and they're going to be selected over us.”

But the generational dynamic is not always a negative one. When Kiana Lipacinski, 28, started working at the Halford-Clemente-Medical after graduating from journalism school in 2004, she hoped to spin a summer contract into a full-time job. One of the few laid-off papers left in the country, the

company found it was the only unutilized print outlet in the city. It felt really fortunate to be there,” she says. More than job security, the union meant that, unlike in many other newspapers, there weren't plenty of veteran reporters around to shadow her the ropes. She credits them with helping her to secure a permanent job in 2005. And when she was laid off in February, part of a “bumping” process that saw a number of young journalists asked out, senior reporters rallied together, asking buyers to “keep some doors open for younger workers,” she says, and organizing rallies to protest the cuts. “They were an incredible support system to me.” Though she regrets that younger workers like her were forced out the door, as far as her older colleagues are concerned, “It's hard to hold anything against them.” Now Lipacinski is on contract again, waiting for a break.

But laying off young workers can also take a toll on the company, and those left behind. Jeff Foley, who has worked in a paper mill in Liverpool, N.S., since 1986, has lived with what many companies say now he's experienced in the short lives with the recession. He says his employer, Ashland/Worldwide, hasn't hired in earnest in more than a decade. The hiring freeze has meant there are people at the bottom who have been at the mill for years, and classified as “spares.” “They might get the occasional fixed-bid worker, the kids of job security means that they don't last long. And when they go,” says Foley, who's also, they have the others, mostly boomers, to fill the gaps, working long hours in the interim. But says Foley, “I would love nothing more than to see the young people hired because we need them here.” What's more, he says, “there will come a point where all of a sudden, they're not going to have any trained people left at all.” Still, Foley, who has two teenage kids, knows the prospect of losing his job is worse. “It's not the same,” he says. “It's more

gaps, and kids, and paying for school.” It wasn't supposed to be this way. Millennials, these-called child-of-the-recessioners, were raised to believe that employers would be falling over each other to recruit them, so it's no wonder that the recession has left many of them with a sense of betrayal. “You want to get to the next step in life. It feels like you're stuck,” says Ryan White, a 27-year-old with a quality assurance certification. Sometimes he wishes he was born 10 years earlier, “The last time, there were some good years. We're coming right at the end of the last,” he says. But beyond frustration about being unemployed

A SENSE OF ENTITLEMENT IS RIFE AMONG BOOMERS, WHO STARTED WORKING PRE-OUTSOURCING, WHEN RECEPTIONISTS STILL OPENED MAIL

or living with their parents, for many the anger also stems from being laid away. “It's one thing to encourage this idea, where we can pursue whatever we want regardless of financial cost,” says 22-year-old Nina Long, who just wrapped up her job as a summer student at the Ontario Ministry of Transportation. “But when push comes to shove, [childhood] need to be able to support themselves.” Young workers, of course, are not the only ones who bought into a vision for the way their lives were supposed to turn out. So-called boomers, just weeks before the real shock, learned that the way he was to be laid off, the sold one of the executives of the telecom company who would be laid off for the past 22 years, “It

be here for the next 25 years if you'll have me.” She had also announced that they would wait her. “The only way I thought I could ever be laid off is to be fired because I did some thing stupid,” she says. According to Vancouver-based career coach Alanna Perna, a sense of entitlement is just as common among boomers, who entered the workforce before tech support was considered to be a job, and receptionists still opened the mail. They resented that if they were laid off employers and would accordingly, resentment would look something like a 1960s 55-century when boomers, complete with cocktails and little umbrellas. More than any other group, says Perna, “it's people in their 40s, 50s and 60s who are saying, ‘I worked this hard. I was when my predecessors had it at my age!’” And not getting a feels like a raw deal.

What may have catalyzed the battle between the oldest and youngest members of the workforce is that shared sense of entitlement. But if younger workers have had to show that entitlement on the door, so perhaps should older workers. One novel—and controversial—idea that has emerged in the wake of the recession is a proposal forwarded by Boston University economics professor Lawrence J. Krashinsky. In a recent New York Times online round table, if older workers are less attractive to hire because of the high salary as they're paid, why not pay workers less as they age? “Though the concept of rewarding more experienced workers with higher salaries has long been ingrained in the minds of employers,” Krashinsky argues that pay should instead be commensurate with productivity. And since most workers peak at 40, he says pay should gradually decline after that. Not only would older workers receive a lower rate, it would also make it more worthwhile for firms to keep them around in the first place.

On the other side, millennials are slowly reconsidering the assumption that dedicated job generation. According to Toronto Youth Opportunities coordinator Khadija Ellis, young people are rethinking how the Internet is no replacement for a “face-to-face meeting.” It's also one of the most valuable things he has learned from the employment program he attended is “how to call out”—to fly from the land of social networking to which he is accustomed. For Lock, in some ways, losing his job was what he needed “to get booted in the butt to get out the door and do something different.” Instead of trying for another job in telecom, she's returning to become a library technician. More than the books, she says she's excited about the technology. And she adds, with a note that evokes a little millennialism, “You have to be happy, otherwise it's just drudgery.” ■



GORDON BROWN was struggling a few years ago. Now his cut-out is being pulled with brute.

BROKE BRITANNIA

The U.K.'s experiment in U.S.-style capitalism was an utter disaster

BY JARON BERRY • Over the past year the world has watched in awe as the United States, the self-declared greatest country on earth, was brought to its knees by the recession. But few have noticed the whispering in the corner: That would be Britain, and by many measures, it's suffering much, much worse. It's not a conclusion as Carl Bernstein's experiment in American-style capitalism.

The collapse is everywhere. In the second quarter the U.K. economy shrank by 5.5 per cent. With unemployment soaring, the opposition Tories claim five million Britons haven't held a job since the Labour government came to power in 1997. Everyone, it seems, has been hit. Daily Originals, an organic food company launched by Prince Charles two decades ago, is reportedly teetering on the brink and is in talks to be gobbled up by a grocery chain. As the prince himself might say, "We are not immune."

It's becoming evident from just a few years ago. Riding the crest of soaring house prices and low unemployment, it was a time of untrammeled prosperity and optimism for Britain. Then, chancellor of the exchequer Gordon Brown was fond of boasting that the nation was enjoying the longest period of economic growth in over 200 years. Britain was so successful, America was starting to feel nervous. In early 2007, billionaire New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, along with other senior officials, agonized over a report

from McKinsey & Company that warned London was slipping its grip as the financial capital of the world. "New York has become less attractive relative to London over the last three years," the report stated flatly.

As we know now, the U.K. was chasing the same disastrous strategies that put the U.S. economy on such shaky ground—at times, to an even more extreme degree. Conservatives were changing up their lavish lifestyles on credit cards in a frenzied pace. By 2007, British households were the most indebted in the G7 group of developed countries, with a debt load totaling 181 per cent of disposable income. (The U.S. peaked out at a mere 143 per cent.) The housing market was also heavily reliant on subprime mortgages to prop it up. By some estimates, in 2007 the average house in Britain cost seven times what first-time buyers earned in a year, making British homes even more expensive than U.S. homes according to that measure. The country's largest financial institutions were all too eager to play along, so long as it meant fat bonuses for bankers and hedge fund managers. Now many of those globe-conquering institutions, such as the Bank of Scotland, are owned by taxpayers.

The recession has touched off a year of

redemptions and ridicule for the country. Earlier this year the U.K. economy was overtaken by France in size. Just as criticism for John, Prince, and Germany are now expected to return to growth will follow the U.K. down. Meanwhile, the financial crisis has helped to expose a misbegotten government response to it, in which politicians from all three parties were caught lying, hiding or obscuring their party's culpability as reasons for their country's economic missteps. The cry of economic responsibility is a nation's cry of control.

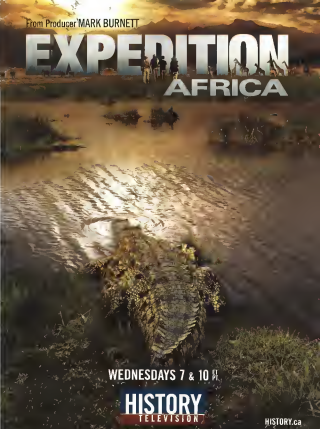
A group of accountants recently declared that Britain's mistakes are "at an end," but before it can hope to get itself back on track, the country will have to deal with a staggering debt load. Last month Britain's debt passed the \$5.4 trillion mark. Every month the country must borrow nearly \$18 billion just to keep government services running. The U.S. is faced with its own crushing debt load, of course. But the International Monetary Fund predicts Britain's debt will swell to 160 per cent of GDP within five years, twice as high as the U.S. In May, Standard & Poor's, the credit rating agency, lowered the outlook for Britain's debt from "stable" to "negative," meaning the specter of an outright downgrade of its rating. AAA rating. It would be a frightfully wrong move that would drive up borrowing costs and further hurt the economy.

Howard Wharfedale, a senior strategist at BGC Partners in London, now believes that Britain's recovery is more at risk than America's. "The U.S. has a much greater freedom to spend than a small island country which badly let itself down," he says. "Whether politics will take more than a decade to bring Britain's public finances under control. Making matters worse, Vicky Redwood, an economist at Capital Economics in London, predicts the U.K. will have to cut spending by two to three per cent a year, and impose tax increases of at least \$36 billion a year to right its finances. "We've obviously passed the worst and some sort of recovery is underway," she says. "But that's still the prospect of a severe fiscal consolidation."

Last fall, in the darkest days of the crisis, Queen Elizabeth met with economists from the London School of Economics and asked a simple question: "How come nobody could foresee this?" It's a question the island nation will be asking itself for years to come. ■

EMPLOYEE
in the
WEEK

'SHOUTY' EMAILS NOT GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL
Nothing says confrontational like an email written in big, red capital letters. That was the opinion of the New Zealand health care company that fired an employee for sending out too many "shouty" messages. For five part, Vicki Walker says the messages were intended to catch her co-workers' attention, and called the allegations "ridiculous." The tribunal that heard her case agreed, and awarded her \$10,500 for the unfair dismissal.



From Producer MARK BURNETT

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Weed your way around the world

WWOOF connects volunteers with organic farmers

BY MICHAEL BÖHLEN • The routine was brutal. He got up at 4:30 a.m. and started weeding at five. Two hours later they passed around the bread for breakfast. On the hands and knees, loaned out to a neighbor's farm, he threw his gloved hands into mud and yanked out potatoes. The woman next to him giggled when she thought he was the owner of a potato plant and pulled up a wet instead. After lunch, they packaged the vegetables harvested that morning for market, slaving until noon at night. Then Jovan Jafar fell into the men's quarters, a modest, dark place, and slept. He was not an endowment recipient. He was on holiday.

"It was just back-breaking work," says the 31-year-old Toronto public servant, whose vacation in Indonesia came back to two weeks' work. WWOOFing—volunteering on organic farms in exchange for room and board—in Nagano, Japan. His story might suggest he was a one-time experimenter, yet Jafar has returned again and again to what he sees as a cheap method of travel offering a glimpse of "part of society and of a people you don't get by travelling from hotel to hotel."

WWOOFing organizations—the acronym stands for World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms—now exist in over 300 countries, connecting volunteers with farmers. In exchange for weeding, feeding and shoveling manure—normally for no more than an hour

a day/Jafar's Nagano partner was an orchardist—the volunteer received food and accommodation, usually living as part of the family.

Began in England in 1971, WWOOFing has grown to growing interest in local food and organics, along with a conscience that's permeating many new graduates that's entering the workforce, is helping turn it into a growth industry. Five years ago, WWOOF Canada hosted 1,500 volunteers and 500 participating farms; there are now well over 2,000 WWOOFers signed up and close to 900 hosts, though the organization does no advertising. "With this so-called economic downturn, we haven't experienced any change—our numbers are up," says WWOOF Canada founder John Van der Horst. "We're easily doing 10 per cent growth every year. But I don't want to be compared with a business. We are a program providing an amazing experience."

Indeed, WWOOFing may even replace the old roughing-it-as-days-off-weeding and kibbutzing. "Why would anyone want to do the backbreaking and backbreaking experience when they could do WWOOFing—there's the work, but in exchange you get so much more," says 25-year-old Mark Wade, who graduated from

never done that before," he says.

There are now perhaps as many as 10,000 WWOOFers around the world, Van der Horst says, most in their 20s. WWOOFers have often are not uncommon (65 per cent of WWOOFers in Canada are women). The majority have never even gardened before. "I'd never chopped wood—I almost took off my leg the first time I did it," says Alan Wang, a 18-year-old Montreal Ph.D. student. "Some people think, 'Oh, it's just a way of getting cheap labour,'" says Rory McQuaid, who receives WWOOFers in his farmstead in London, Ont. "It's actually, because you have to learn a fair bit of hard and intense and intensive." Many WWOOFers seek adventure, often a gardening primer. (Anne Ducharme, a 44-year-old Quebec City WWOOFer, planted a garden at home after she and her husband learned the ropes on a farm in the mountains of Tazewell.) The farm experience, visible to have their fields for travel, see the world come to them.

Not all bites—WWOOFers are equal. "You've got some strange ones in the front door and then all of a sudden you're living together," says Van der Horst. The occasional WWOOFer is lazy, some farmers are too demanding or mean with landless and distant. But the best part of all is the familiarity that breeds contempt. "We never had any bad WWOOFers," says 21-year-old Nova Scotia, who grew up with WWOOFers on her parents' farm in the Annapolis Valley. "They kind of become part of the family. And all I can remember do, they get annoying."

WWOOFer Sabine Christ of Peace in Jonestown, Ont.

McMaster University with a gold-silver last spring and set out for B.C. His resources thinning, Wade reached out to a farmer in Ontario. "I knew John was his name," Wade recalls. "He says, 'Yes, come tomorrow and we will find you.'"

WWOOFing introduced the Toronto boy to a world of new vegetables—green chard and garlic scapes (his enthusiasm persuaded him to shop at the farmers' market)—and no quarantining in Cape Breton. "I'd

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WISCONSIN: AN OFFICIAL BIRD THAT CAN'T FLY

Wisconsin's state capital of Madison has a new official bird: the plastic pin. The Wisconsin City Council has granted the lower organism its official bird to commemorate a college prank committed in 1976, when University of Wisconsin students planted 1,000 of the birds outside the dean's office. Alderman Marka Buiswell told the Wisconsin State Journal that she would make the move to ensure the prank was "enshrined in our legislators' forever."



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JACQUES F. FOLSON

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★ MACLEAN'S THIRD ANNUAL ★

CANADA'S BEST PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS



P.36
LAW

Our third annual ranking of law schools. Plus, would-be lawyers who don't fit the mould, and why grads face tough choices.



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The good and bad news about family practice. Plus, med schools by the numbers.



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Why the job market is looking up for business graduates. Plus, how Canada's b-schools rank in the world.



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ENGINEERING

Where have all the women gone? Plus, the stats you need to know.

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RANKING CANADA'S LAW SCHOOLS

From their annual ranking of Canadian law schools, Maclean's assigned each institution against recognized measures of faculty quality and of how well graduates do in the workplace. In all, we sought to answer two questions: Are law school's professors significant contributors to the intellectual life of their discipline? And do law school's graduates find the most sought-after jobs in government, the

private sector and academia? For the third year in a row, the University of Toronto Faculty of Law takes the top spot. McGill Faculty of Law also maintains its second-place position for the third year running. But this year it shares that spot with Osgoode Hall Law School, which last year ranked third.

All of the data used in the Maclean's law rankings are publicly available. All focus

on law school outputs. Fifty per cent of the overall ranking is determined by faculty quality, and 50 per cent by graduate quality. The four measures of graduate quality look at the success rate law school law had producing graduates able to find the most competitive jobs. The indicators are:

Elite Firm Hiring: Maclean's calculated how many of each school's graduates are serving as associates at law firms on LawPro's list

of the largest firms in the Canadian region, or as one of the five leading New York firms, according to the employer website Vault. This measure by examining the entire hierarchy of thousands of lawyers at dozens of law firms. To scale this measure to each school, the tally was divided by three-year data run, averaged over the past three years. This measure is worth 20 per cent.

No Clinical Reach: This indicator, based on the Bar Firm Hiring measure, accounts to 10 per cent. It measures the proportion of each law school's graduates who are working at firms other than the three that hired the most grads from this school. It's a measure of the extent to which leading firms outside a school's region hire its graduates.

Supreme Court Clerkships: A measure of how many of a school's graduates have

served as clerks at the Supreme Court of Canada. There are 27 clerks each year, it is one of the most competitive positions open to graduates. Maclean's looked at the last two years' worth of clerks. As with the other measures of graduate quality, the tally was divided by each school's average first-year enrolment.

Faculty Hiring: Worth 10 per cent, this indicator looks at how many of a school's graduates are professors at Canadian law schools, with extra weight given to grads hired by faculties other than their alma mater.

Faculty Journal Citations: In this measure a faculty quality worth 10 per cent, Maclean's employed the HeinOnline database of legal periodicals. The search included citations in international publications as well as Canadian journals in order to reflect the reality

of a globalized academy. The number of citations recorded by each faculty member was measured, the tally for each school was then divided by the size of its faculty.

There are 36 common law schools and five civil law schools in Canada. Common and civil law schools are ranked separately, but overall according to the same criteria. ■

The most heady lecture hall the Maclean's law school ranking was on stand at its inception was professor Brian Latham, the John P. Wilson Professor of Law and director of the Center for Law, Philosophy and Human Values at the University of Chicago. The data were supplied by more than 500 law firms and faculty members. Ranking on each indicator and overall rank was determined using the statistical percentile method that Maclean's has long employed in annual university rankings. Our statisticians are Hong Chen of MacDougall Schwartz Ltd. and Robert C. Condon.

Common Law Schools ranking

Canada's law schools were evaluated according to four measures of student graduate quality: worth 50 per cent, and one measure of faculty quality, worth 50 per cent. All measures were calculated relative to the quality of each school. Elite Firm Hiring is worth 20 per cent, National Reach—a measure of how widely employed a school's graduates

are—and Supreme Court Clerkships are each weighted at 10 per cent. Faculty Hiring is worth 10 per cent and looks at how many grads were hired by law faculty members, with extra weight given to those hired by faculties other than their alma mater. Faculty Citations is a measure assessing how often academics cite each school's professors.

OVERALL RANK		GRADUATE QUALITY				FACULTY QUALITY	
	Rank Last Year	Elite Firm Hiring	National Reach	Supreme Court Clerkships	Faculty Hiring	Faculty Journal Citations	
1	Toronto (10)	1	3 ¹	2	1	2	2
2	McGill (2)	2	2 ¹	1	2	5	1
3	Osgoode (3)	3	1 ¹	3 ¹	3	6	3
4	UofC (16)	4	5 ¹	4 ¹	7	7	3 ¹
5	Western (36)	13	3 ¹	4	3 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹
6	Queen's (38)	11	3 ¹	10 ¹	6	6	6
7	Dalhousie (56)	16	11 ¹	6 ¹	3 ¹	3 ¹	8
8	Ontario (7)	14	11 ¹	3	12 ¹	7	7
9	Alberta (70)	8	3 ¹	10 ¹	10	9	10
10	McGill (137)	7	3 ¹	14 ¹	3 ¹	13	13
11	Carleton (139)	6	3 ¹	14 ¹	16	10	10
12	Saskatchewan (139)	9	13	10 ¹	8	16	16
13	Manitoba (150)	5	16	10 ¹	12 ¹	11 ¹	11 ¹
14	New Brunswick (172)	3	16	8	11	15	15
15	Windward (182)	10	3 ¹	16	12 ¹	11 ¹	11 ¹
16	Marquette (192)	16	15	3 ¹	12 ¹	15	15

¹Indicates tie.

Civil Law Schools ranking

Ranking of Canada's law schools are common law schools, the law of the Anglo tradition and of most provinces. Five schools are civil law schools. Civil and common law schools were evaluated according to the same criteria. Osgoode Hall is the only common law school located outside

of Quebec; the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Law offers two distinct streams, civil and common. McGill offers both common and civil law training. In next program, the Université de Moncton, though operating entirely in French, also is a common law school.

OVERALL RANK		GRADUATE QUALITY				FACULTY QUALITY	
	Rank Last Year	Elite Firm Hiring	National Reach	Supreme Court Clerkships	Faculty Hiring	Faculty Journal Citations	
1	Moncton (10)	1	1	1 ¹	1	1	1
2	Ottawa (2)	2	2	2 ¹	2	2	2
3	UofC (3)	3	3 ¹	3 ¹	3	3	3
4	UQAM (4)	4	4	4 ¹	4	4	4
5	Shenandoah (5)	5	5 ¹	5 ¹	5	5	5

¹Indicates tie.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL BARRY

MACLEAN'S SEPT. 21, 2009

THE ROADS TO LAW SCHOOL

Think you know what makes a lawyer? These three law students might change your mind.

BY ERIN MILLAR • Not all law students have been preparing for a legal career since realizing their dream as a kid. And not all are thrill-seekers for whom higher education is a given. In fact, for many, pursuing a law degree is a step up, or a way out—from humble circumstances, a troubled neighbourhood, or a hard job.

Meet three Canadians who overcame significant obstacles to go to law school, carrying those around them—and themselves—over the finish line.

MICHAEL FRETWICH University of Alberta

The son of a well-known writer and a stay-at-home mom, Michael Fretwisch as a teenager had no ambitions to go to university. "All I knew about university was it's where you went to become a teacher and was really expensive," he recalls. So in 1989, when Fretwisch—by then the father of three daughters and a cousin for the local school district in his northern B.C. hometown of Williams Lake—started taking distance education courses from the University of Waterloo, he had to explain the point of learning about a subject as esoteric as philosophy instead of something more concrete, like, say, welding. "This is for me," he remembers telling people who asked what he hoped to get out of his

studies. "I need to have this degree, and that's a good enough reason for me."

It took him more than six years to figure out what to do with his education. After taking a few years off from studying, he hit the books again in 1999, took one course at a time and got his philosophy degree in 2006. Diploma in hand, he googled, "What can you do with a philosophy degree?" (The latest answer? "Law school.") It was a revelation for Fretwisch. "Wow, I could be a lawyer! It was a light bulb moment."

Many law schools have special application processes for mature students who may have proved themselves through work experience rather than academics. But Fretwisch realized quickly that his experience as a casual and casual labourer wasn't going to offer

any advantage, so he applied as a regular student. His memories the day he received his acceptance letter with crystal clarity: "Crier was, I was as dead as if it gun," he says. "With the letter, I realized that there's life beyond this. It was pretty wonderful."

In 2007, at the age of 43, Fretwisch moved into residence in Edmonton and earned law school at the University of Alberta—the same year his youngest daughter started university.

MESHA-GAYE DONALDSON University of Windsor

Mesha-Gaye Donaldson could be a character from an investigative *True Life* tale. Her parents moved to Canada, away from the violence and poor education system of rural Jamaica, because they wanted their daughters to pursue higher education, an opportunity they themselves never had. But when they moved to the Jane and Finch neighbourhood of Toronto in 1988, they didn't find the Canada of their dreams. Donaldson calls her home a "ghetto," characterized by poverty, violence and friends who are now in jail or dead.

Never let it go: In Grade 5—around the time most people are learning cursive—a frightened and nervous—(in addition, she decided she wanted to become a lawyer, and the decision stuck. "I guess I'm stubborn," she says, laughing. No one from either side of her family had gone to university, but in secondary school she studied hard while working evenings and weekends to save for tuition—and she still managed to graduate a year early. Her plans were not always encouraged. "I've had a lot of naysayers," Donaldson says. "I had a teacher in high school laugh at me when I told him I was graduating early."

When she applied to law school at the University of Windsor after earning a double degree in political science and research studies there, she knew her employment, volunteer experience and strong moral made her a competitive candidate. But she was still anxious. "I had never met a black lawyer," she says. "I was worried about going into a profession that was predominantly male, white and middle-class."

After two years in law school, Donaldson, 24, has found that both the Windsor faculty of law and the legal profession in general are working hard to become more diverse. And so are her parents' Canadian friends. Not only are two of her daughters now in university, but Donaldson's mother also went back to school and is now a registered nurse. "My mom was an amazing example for me," Donaldson says, "because it proved that I could do anything despite what people told you."

JIM JARSON Dalhousie University

At 17, Jim Jarson started working in a Halifax-based carnival, travelling the Maritime driving tracks, becoming an expert at firing the cotton candy machine, and running a popular gambling game where customers throw plastic hockey balls at different col-

ours months old, his brother. "His first crib was a fish tray used as our bed in the travel trailer." He wanted a more settled lifestyle for his kids. Besides, two of Jarson's brothers had died of heart attacks at the ages of 34 and 45. "There are not very many old guys who work at the carnival," he says. "They all wear out. It's an intense lifestyle."

No one from her family had gone to university, but Donaldson knew she would. 'I guess I'm stubborn,' she says.

oured squares. He also travelled part-time in Dalhousie University that year—1979—eventually earning a degree in economics, but he wasn't particularly interested in university.

The carnival life treated him well as a young man. But in 2004, after 25 years in the business, Jarson realized that he had to do some thing different with his life. He had no children. One of his older daughters began travelling with the carnival before she was

18—and he wanted. When he was rejected a second time, Jarson began to get frustrated but, finally, he was with loved on his third try and was eventually accepted.

He thinks that his persistence was key to getting into law school. "I was very serious about doing it once I decided," says Jarson, 61. "I said to myself, 'Well, I'll have to do whatever they tell me I have to do, and I'll get it.' And it worked." ■

DALHOUSIE LAW STUDENT Jim Jarson used to be a carnival worker—his daughter's first crib was a fish tray in the travel trailer he recalls



PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID GALLS

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"I WANT to be a family doctor," says UBC medical student Sean Moore, tending to patient Herbert Ernst in Maple Ridge, B.C.

WHERE DID YOU GO, MARCUS WELBY?

The good news: more med students are choosing family practice. The bad? It's still not enough.

BY TOM HEISENBERGER • You have to be a crazy person to become a family doctor in Canada, right? Everyone knows they're overworked and underpaid, and there aren't nearly enough of them. So how come more and more medical students are considering their huge debts and going into family practice residencies at rates that soar since the early '90s? "I want to be a family doctor," says Sean Moore, a fourth-year med student at the University of British Columbia. "Because it's entirely blew away my expectations."

Moore originally planned to specialize in

emergency medicine. He wanted the thrill and adrenaline of saving lives in an ER. "My original impression of family medicine as a specialty was that you work in an office from 9 to 5 and you are warm and smiles and you're there," he recalls. But his opinion changed during his third year in med school, which he spent at a practice in Chilliwack, a city of 40,000 in B.C.'s Fraser Valley. He realized that as a single doctor serving a large community of patients, his opportunities to sit far beyond beams, chairs and bladders. "You can spend time in the office if you want, but other than that you can catch babies, you can do mammograms, you can do emergency medicine, you can do surgical assists—the spectrum is much broader."

Lately, more medical students are agreeing with Moore: nearly a third now choose family practice, up from less than a quarter

just 10 years ago. That's still fewer than the 40 per cent who chose family practice residencies before 1994. But the situation is far better than it was earlier in the decade, when lack of student interest in family medicine threatened a full-blown health care crisis.

In 2001, family practice was the first choice of only 28.2 per cent of grads; by 2003, that number had dropped to 24.9 per cent. "The shoe had definitely worn off family medicine," says Dr. Tom Freeman, chair of the department of family medicine at the University of Western Ontario's Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry, where in 2004 only 21 per cent of students chose to do family practice residencies. Freeman says, and "the transition issue was a major problem in some practices."

Medical students often graduate with entre-



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ave debt, sometimes exceeding \$100,000. According to a study by the Canadian Institute for Health Information, GPs made an average of \$202,411 in 2004 and 2005 (the latest years for which data are available), medical specialists earned \$265,954 and surgical specialists made \$356,002. The problem wasn't just low pay, but the method of payment. In most provinces, doctors are paid primarily through a fee-for-service system. Under this model, GPs are paid for each service—such as office visits or tests—they provide. Because it rewards physicians for the number of patients they see in-office, fee-for-service can discourage after-hours and clinical work, as well as preventative medicine. That encourages a narrowing of the family practice role, which cuts into much of the variety that attracts medical students to family practice in the first place.

'Some family doctors might work 50, 60, 70 hours a week,' says Dr. Gerry O'Hanley. Will young medical grads want that workload?

For years now, doctors have been calling for change, and most provinces have been slow to respond. But Ontario, for one, has revamped its payment scheme. "Those who are doing the comprehensive scope of practice, doing more than just sitting in their office all day by getting out and attending to the needs of their patients wherever they find them—those people are getting rewarded now," says Patterson.

He says that thanks to those changes, as well as better incentive and support programs for family doctors, the number of students going into family practice at Schulich has increased from 15 to 40 per cent over the past five years. That turnaround has been echoed nationally—32.5 per cent of medical students listed family medicine as their first pick for residency training in 2009.

Yet there is still a severe shortage of doctors, especially in rural Canada, and it goes beyond the issue of medical students choosing family practice. In 2006, a mere one per cent of Canada's family doctors worked in rural communities to 25 per cent of the population. The worst shortage is in Nunavut. According to a 2007 study, only 29 doctors per 100,000 people practice in the territory. That's less than half the ratio in South Africa, which has one of the world's worst doctor shortages.



FOR NOORE, a third-year start in Orléans, B.C., changed his mind about family practice.

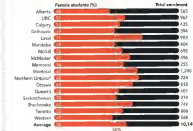
"They get a whole lot harder" outside the city, says Dr. Gerry O'Hanley, an optometrist and former family doctor who's been practicing in Prince Edward Island for more than 30 years. "Some of them may work 50, 60, 70 hours a week, and some more." With such low numbers, it's hard for rural doctors to find colleagues to share activities, meaning they're forced to work alone constantly. And with specialist and specialist diagnostic equipment readily available, they have to worry that their patients won't receive adequate or timely care. "They often don't have the physical plant to work with," says O'Hanley. "They don't have the

diagnostic aids. They don't have the medical and allied health personnel around them that would be arrayed for a family practitioner who's in a more urban practice." He illustrates the difficulty of rural practice with the example of a hospital in the small town of O'Leary, P.E.I. It doesn't have a single specialist on staff, and is run by only four general practitioners. "It's 24-7 town's hospital," O'Hanley says. "It's very hard to maintain over the long term."

Governments and universities are striving to ensure doctors wind up where they're most needed. The University of British Columbia has opened a satellite campus in Prince George,

MEDICAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Enrollment at Canadian medical schools was up by more than five per cent in 2008. Women continue to outnumber men at most institutions, sometimes by a wide margin.



*Northern Ontario School of Medicine is located at Lakehead and Laurentian universities. Source: Office of Research and Information Services, Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada



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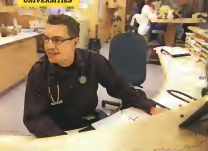
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"YOU CAN't get the scope of your own practice," says Moore, "which is really attractive."

775 km north of Vancouver, that takes students to rural medicine and tries to entice them into entering residence in the area. Lakehead and Laurentian universities jointly opened the Northern Ontario School of Medicine in Thunder Bay in 2001, and UWO has

a program that requires students to spend at least one week at a rural practice. Med schools have also started giving priority to applicants from outside of cities—students who are more likely to return to the countryside.

In Saskatoon, the government of Manitoba

MEDICAL SCHOOL: WHAT DO YOU NEED TO GET IN?

The table below shows the kind of grades—and money—students will need if they are interested in going to medical school. The grade point average (GPA)—on a 4.0 scale—is the case of Quebec's CEGEP system—shown the average for incoming first-year students. The medical college admission test (MCAT) is a standardized test required for admission at most facilities. GPA and MCAT scores are for the fall 2002 entering class. Tuition is for first-year students entering medical school this fall.

	Average GPA (4.0 scale)	Average MCAT	Tuition Canadian Students	Tuition International
Alberta	3.4*	11.27	\$11,540	Not applicable
UBC	3.46*	10.23	\$15,154	Not applicable
Calgary	3.62*	10.91	\$14,385	Not applicable
Edmonton	3.8	10	\$13,818	\$21,984
Level 2 (course 33.5) (CEGEP) Risque 32 (university)	Not required Not required		\$2,927* (Quebec students) \$1,433* (rest of province)	\$30,294
McGill	4.16 (H scale)	10.72	\$1,143	Not applicable
McGill (Borg)	3.72	Not required	\$4,582 (Quebec students) \$13,836 (rest of province)	\$35,437
McGill (Borg)	3.72	Not required	\$19,258	Not applicable
McMaster	3.2*	9.8	\$4,250	\$30,000
McMaster (Borg)	N/A	Not required	\$2,423 (Quebec students) \$1,061 (rest of province)	\$19,900
McMaster (Borg)	N/A	Not required	\$16,775	Not applicable
Ottawa	3.46*	Not required	\$16,250	Not applicable
Northern Ontario**	3.72	Not required	\$16,818	Not applicable
Queen's	3.56*	N/A	\$11,347	Not applicable
Saskatchewan	3.56*	9.32	\$2,437*	\$23,437*
Thunder Bay	N/A	Not required	\$8,247 (rest of province)	\$23,437*
UWinnipeg	3.46	11.02	\$17,857	\$48,420
Western	N/A	N/A	\$17,848	Not applicable

Tuition does not include other compulsory fees, which can range from several hundred dollars to a high of \$2,400 at McGill. International tuition does not include costs that some medical schools have with foreign governments or educational institutions to give the medical education on a cost recovery basis.

* Listed at Lakehead and Laurentian websites.

Source: Q19 and 2000 tuition from Office of Research and Information Services, Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada. MCAT scores and 2001 tuition obtained directly from Canadian medical schools.

is offering money to provide bonuses to doctors working outside cities, and Alberta has established a rural physician action plan. The government of Ontario has created a model for physician group practices, called Family Health Groups, which give a minimum of three doctors with various areas of practice, social workers and therapists in their workloads and provide better overall care.

But despite all the work, and the increasing interest in family practice among students, O'Hanley thinks the challenges will only get more severe, at least in the short term. He says too many doctors are due for retirement, and that their replacements are cut from a very different stack. "We don't produce doctors who work 80 to 90 hours, and that's probably a good thing, but it affects patient care," he says. "Some old-time GPs are getting replaced by three or four people."

Moore, 35, is part of that new breed. His experience in Chatham taught him about the challenges of family practice and the problems inherent with working in the country side, but he doesn't plan on working more than 40 hours a week. "You can set your own hours and the scope of your own practice, which is really attractive," he says. "Family medicine is what you make it." Moore points to the example of a friend who spends half his time working as a doctor, and the other half running a water-buffing business.

Practices like that are good for individual MDs, as O'Hanley says, but they mean the system needs more doctors to replace the ones who eventually never took a break. And the situation is made even worse because of bad planning in the '60s, when provincial governments in action as recommendations from the 1961 Batten-Stoddart report, which urged three to save money by graduating fewer doctors and relying more on other health care workers, such as nurses and dietitians. Governments listened, and cut funding to med schools to redress that. The severity of the MD shortage.

"The medical schools across Canada are in fact ramping up their enrolment," says Dr. Arnet Doug, president of the Canadian Medical Association. "But it's a slow process." She says the solution is complex. Schools have to increase recruitment, governments must increase funding, remove payment schemes, and pay more attention to ensuring an even distribution of doctors. And they must provide more incentives and better support for doctors going into rural medicine. "The long-term picture is, we'll get there," Doug says. "It's not going to be a two- to five-year solution. It may be a 10- to 20-year solution."

Moore agrees. "It is a crisis," he says. "But it is a pretty serious."



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LET'S ALL PLAY DOCTOR

Do you have what it takes to get through the Multiple Mini Interview?

BY ERIN HILLMAN • In the last 10 years, medical faculty at McMaster University in Ireland were growing increasingly frustrated with the interview used to evaluate medical school applicants. Even the most conscientious interviewers, it seemed, were biased, and there was often no correlation between the interview process and the subsequent performance of students. "The interview was admitting students who were approaching hangoverland," explains Jack Rosefield, a professor emeritus in pathology and molecular medicine at McMaster. "The interview process was letting in people who should not have gotten in and excluding people who should have."

So Rosefield and his colleagues proposed a medical new system called the Multiple Mini-Interviews (MMIs). Instead of relying on pre-planned questions to typical interview questions, applicants would have to work through 10 to 12 eight-minute stations where they'd respond to carefully scripted actions, make ethical decisions or try to solve hands-on problems—all under the watchful eyes of a group of interviewers.

The MMI was a success: a 2004 study published in the journal *Medical Education* found that it succeeded in diluting the effect of interviewer bias and provided valuable insights into an applicant's abilities. A 2007 follow-up study found significant correlations between MMI results and later performance on clinical clerkships and national licensing exams.

Now, five years after McMaster implemented the MMI in the face of aggressive resistance from the health care establishment—a lot of Canadian medical schools have adopted the practice. In fact, the MMI has

McMaster pioneered its spread to universities in England, Australia and New Zealand. How applicants are judged remains a closely guarded secret. Medical schools provide little information on how to prepare, and no universities anyone taking the MMI is required to sign a confidentiality agreement. Most schools are serious about keeping the mystery in how the MMI works, are applicants who stand out a training session for judges (specific questions were not discussed) was

difficult to prepare for.

Common approaches include practicing example questions that are posted online and reading up on medical ethics issues in academic journals. Some schools offer mock MMI sessions, but at most successful applicants interviewed for this article chose not to take it. "I think [did with] me [was] just practice," gestures. "I didn't have formulated answers," said first-year McMaster med student Rachel Lessor. "A lot of people read what they were going to say in private. That's not natural."

Rosefield also cautioned against practicing. "When asked how best to prepare, he quoted his colleague, high-profile American neurosurgeon. 'The only way to prepare is to start reading when you're 15, and read everything that you can.'"

Door No. 1

The better sounds. An applicant, standing with her back to the interview room, turns around, finds a piece of paper posted to the door and has two minutes to read and think about this scenario. "Dr. Blair gives his patients sugar pills. He acknowledges that he uses the placebo effect, but he's taking it that it does no harm and makes people feel better. Consider the ethical problems that Dr. Blair's behavior might pose." The buzzer sounds again and the applicant exits the room, introduces herself to the interviewers and begins discussing the problem for up to eight minutes.

This example is typical of MMI questions because it has no correct answer. Rosefield explains: "You can go either direction because some doctors use the placebo effect very effectively, very skillfully. What's important, he adds, is that applicants demonstrate an ability to consider and evaluate both sides of an argument, then come to a position and be able to defend it."

The judges

Who is interviewing the applicant was one of the most ethical of the placebo effect? Not expert professors, but members of the local community, medical students and medical professionals.

The interviewers are given a general overview of how MMIs work a couple of weeks in advance—but they don't receive their specific MMI questions and background information

until a couple of hours before the interview starts. "We can't risk giving those stations out ahead of time," Rosefield explains. "If those applicants somewhere catches a glimpse of a station, there will be the devil to pay."

Because interviewers aren't experts on the topics they are assessing, they aren't looking for in-depth knowledge. It's an applicant's "One of the most important things is the attitude of the applicant and their communication," and Jeremy Hernandez, a second-year MD/PhD student at McMaster, who has been an MMI applicant twice and an interviewer once. He stressed that how applicants come across is just as important as what they say. "[The MMI] shows the person that you are, instead of the person you can practice to be," he says.

Door No. 2

The buzzer sounds. Scenario: "Your company needs both you and a co-worker (Sara, a colleague from another branch of the company) to attend a critical business meeting in San Diego. You have just arrived to drive Sara to the airport."

"Sara" (an actor) is debilitated by fear of flying. No matter what approach the applicant takes to urge her to get on the plane, the actor challenges the applicant. The hysterical and

irational Sara may accuse the applicant of patronizing her or, if the applicant is aggressive, Sara may start crying. The interviewer clearly observes how the applicant reacts.

"I personally found it very difficult since it involved interacting with the actor as though

'You could be a horrible actor, but does that mean you will be a bad doctor?'

they were my friend, active or co-workers," Hernandez recalls of the interactions. "In the back of my mind, I knew that the situation was not real." Almost every applicant interviewed for this article agreed that acting stations are the most challenging. "You could be a horrible actor, but does that mean you will be a bad doctor?" one applicant asked. "What mistakes do applicants make in acting stations?" Some broke down crying or responded angrily when they got frustrated. But according to Rosefield, one of the most serious errors an applicant can do is to look at the interviewers instead of exclusively dealing with the actor.

Door No. 3

The buzzer sounds. Scenario: "There has been much debate in newspapers regarding the optimal size of class. One side argues that smaller classes provide a more educationally effective setting for students, while others argue that it makes no difference, so larger classes should be used to maximize the number of instructors required and open to a maximum of 2000." In this scenario, applicants demonstrate their critical thinking abilities. Lessor's advice: "Don't be narrow-minded. Think critically about what you're saying. Explain both sides. If you have an opinion, explain it. Show that you see all the perspectives."

Again, the ethical and acting stations, there is no correct answer to this scenario. So how to prepare? Rosefield explains applicants against enrolling in the expensive MMI preparation courses that have popped up in recent years. "I don't think people get value for their money. You can practice all you want and the interviewers just go to offer you anyway."

Some final advice

"You should be looking at yourself as the mirror and seeing about the kind of person you are," says Rosefield, "and really be honest with yourself." ■



THE MMI is notoriously hard to prepare for. How do you study up on empathy?

been used by applying for seven years. Happily, McMaster's under no such restrictions. "We spoke to medical school faculty, successful and unsuccessful applicants, and people who served as MMI judges to find out what happened during the interview process and what kind of person med schools are looking for."

How to prepare

While the MCAT (medical college admission test) main reveals an applicant's knowledge base, the MMI is designed to assess "soft skills": communication, problem-solving, judgment, life experience, ethics, professionalism, ethics, empathy and so on. Of course, being empathetic is not something you can simply study up on in the month before the interview. And that's why the MMI is famously



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WHERE THE JOBS ARE

Tough times don't have to mean tough luck for M.B.A. grads especially in Canada

BY CHRISTOPHER MASON • A flurry there happened to Jordan Sugar this spring, as he prepared to finish his M.B.A. degree at York University's Schulich School of Business: he got a job. And not just any job—he got one in banking.

For Sugar, who was hired by IMMO to work on its trading desk, that was something of a surprise. After all, classroom chatter around Schiffels about job prospects had been every bit as depressing as the economic tragedy playing out on the front pages of newspapers. "Some graduates from 1999-2000, 2001 came in to talk to my class about graduating; would the doc come back and I thought, 'My God,

I couldn't imagine finding a job in that climate," recalls Sugar. "Then I saw Lehman Bros. go under and I thought, 'Uh-oh!'"

Three per cent fall of global financial institutional destinations for a large cohort of graduates—seemed to make MB A a job prospect dropout overnight, the ensuing recession made the outlook even more grim. At least outside of Canada. Here, the picture has turned out to be far different. The country's booming system has held up well, avoiding the need for the large-scale bailouts seen elsewhere. That strength has translated into a sustained job market for MB A's, while American business schools report a drop of as much as 50 per cent in financial sector hiring. Canadian business schools say hiring levels remain strong, though down slightly from last year's above-normal figures.

That means recent graduates like Sugar, who shouls the dream of a banking job, such

THE GLOBE Financial magazine serves students, but in Canada banks are divided

along with Bear Stearns, are finding that top executives remain, especially for the most aggressive and talented graduates. "In all the doom and gloom, you want to hear some counter stories out there, and Canada may be one of them," says Joseph Palumbo, executive director of the Career Development Centre at York's Schulich School of Business in Toronto.

It's not surprising, of course. Hiring by construction firms such as McKinstry, Delcoro & Teague and Boston Consulting Group has either dropped or remained flat—far short of the projected spending budgets in the economy's fastest. All in all, Canadian business schools report that hiring numbers so far have fallen between two and five per cent this year compared with 2008, when hiring was up almost 10 per cent over 2007. Though firms start will emerge that fall, schools say current hiring levels appear to be on par with those seen in 2008.

And why, on the whole, does performance within leading jobs for grade 10 Canadians between schools diverge, concern remains that the (fright) by business schools' search of the border might head their way. "The real lesson is that the sector, in New York and in London and throughout the rest of the world, have created a climate of fear that we're actually seeing a shift, even though the data in Canada does not indicate a downturn in any significant way," says J.P. Macneil, director of the Corporate Communications Centre at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto.

The difference between Canada and the United States comes in large part from Canada's banking sector. Finance can account for as much as 66 per cent of funding at some business schools in northern Ontario, where the Big Five—Royal Bank, BMO, Toronto-Dominion, CIBC and Bank of Nova Scotia—sends among M.B.A. programs 10 to 15 employees if anything, the current economy has given Canada's banking edge in the global competition for top M.B.A. graduates (along with lost oil sector business from abroad). "It's a great opportunity for organizations like us, who are in a growth mode to pick up talent," says Leslie Quinlan, vice president of talent acquisition and development at Toronto-Dominion Bank.

The key for M.B.A. grads now is flexibility. Investment banking is moribund, so those who had their hearts set on it are now considering retail banking or auditing. Some grads will launch their own start-ups, or choose jobs that promise quality of life over big paychecks. Maxwell and others report growing interest among students in energy, nanotech and even technology. Students

CANADA'S H.S.A. PROGRAMS

Nearly three dozen Canadian universities offer M.B.A. degrees, and the traditional M.B.A.—two years, full time—is no longer the only way to go about getting the credential. Tuition has climbed sharply in recent years at most universities, but there are still bargains to be found.

	Average GMAT Score	Tuition (Canadian students)	Tuition (US/EU students)	Program Length (months)	Residency	Female [%]	Intl [%]
Alberta	610	\$24,500	\$47,409	18	415	36	50
UBC (Oaxaca)	660	\$39,766	\$39,766	18	3444	30	58
Brock	610	\$8,060-\$11,729	\$21,313-\$42,628	8-18	16	35	9
Carleton (Ottawa)	610	\$25,930	\$56,290	18	2158	33	56
Cape Breton (Sydney)	520	\$17,719-\$19,424	\$29,130	12	148	63	36
Carleton (Ottawa)	590	\$11,299	\$29,363	12-18	237	46	35
Concordia (Montreal)	615*	\$5,120-\$12,966	\$29,991-\$37,437	12-18	300	32*	6*
Dalhousie	615	\$37,662-\$39,648	\$54,009	22	41	43	12
UBC (Vancouver)	615	\$6,506-\$13,250	\$28,390	12	150	30	45
Ulm (Ulm)	645	\$30,600	\$60,000 US	24-36	28	5	5
Laurier	\$781	\$8,966-\$17,132	\$79,276-\$35,449	6-30	371	26*	57*
Laurier	616	\$3,065-\$18,195	\$21,611	12-18	631	41	29
Manitoba (Winnipeg)	616	\$18,400	\$22,500	11	150	39	13
McGill (Montreal)	619	\$4,411-\$13,417	\$43,838	16-26	125	35	60
McMaster (St Catharines)	620	\$13,025-\$33,186	\$28,306-\$58,476	6-36	384	44	8
Memorial	590	\$4,854	\$7,622	16	110	40	9
Moncton	616	\$28,629-\$25,754	\$29,248-\$32,462	36	41	30	46
New Brunswick (Fredericton)	579	\$16,700-\$20,325	\$24,311-\$33,679	12-18	111	31	43
New Brunswick (Saint John)	580	\$16,400	\$25,472	12	36	30	65
Ottawa (Ottawa)	607	\$39,336	\$29,360	12	49	36	10
Université du Québec à Montréal	N/A	\$5,167-\$7,379	\$19,294	12-18	153	29	58
Queens	679	\$62,500	\$47,500	12	111	32	40
Regina (Regina)	563	\$79,800	\$31,000	10	50	42	20
Royal Military College	600	\$12,560	\$18,660	16	40	46	3
Byrson (Byrson)	602	\$13,745-\$19,868	\$16,993-\$24,888	12-18	174	38	32
Saint Mary's (Halifax)	590	\$11,299-\$14,216	\$21,164-\$27,026	12-20	1003	41	23
St. Mary's (Halifax)	515	\$23,360	\$35,130	12	46	43	22
Shanahan	614	\$4,676-\$16,081	\$18,081	16	176	38	38
Simon Fraser (Surrey)	615	\$27,000-\$30,000	\$27,000-\$30,000	12	50	55	46
Toronto (Toronto)	644	\$69,200	\$49,200	20	5426	30	35
Vancouver Island	N/A	\$11,800	\$20,000	14	143	41	17
Vancouver	548	\$29,058	\$36,000	12	87	33	41
Western (Vancouver)	612	\$64,000	\$14,000	18	560	25	30
Wilfrid Laurier	600	\$28,000-\$31,600	\$27,132	12-18	1000	36	46
Windsor (Windsor)	609	\$14,000	\$38,000	12	80	37	25
York (Toronto)	606	\$23,860-\$40,456	\$30,000-\$60,000	4-16	143	50	32

Information is for the 2009-2010 academic year unless indicated otherwise. Enrollment figures are for full-time students. Tuition is shown for the full cost of a program and includes compulsory fees. Tuition can vary depending on length/duration of program. Two figures are shown for students in Quebec and Nova Scotia as tuition is higher for out-of-province students. *2008-09 figure. †2006-07 figure. Source: Canada's universities.

are also reconsidering governments, in which interest has declined since the 1960s as pay and growth opportunities lagged behind the private sector. In the past year, the kind of stability that government work offers has disappeared as a top priority. "I'm not going to say it is full speed ahead, but because of the diversity of the economy, our students are finding opportunities," says Gordon Pullumson, associate dean of master's programs at the Saba School of Business at Saint Mary's University in Halifax.

Yet even in sectors where hiring is needs-driven, employers are being very selective: they know competition for jobs in the future it's been in years. Increasingly, companies are looking for people who can provide "big picture" thinking, says Robert L. Reardon, a senior advisor to the U.S. Small Business Administration. "We need people who can think outside the box."

ENTREPRENEUR ANJALI SHAH talks about her business to students at Freeman



Beyond Gray Pinstripes is an alternative ranking of business schools, conducted every two years by the Aspen Institute Center for Business Education. The ranking assesses the degree to which leading M.B.A. programs integrate issues concerning social and environmental stewardship into the curriculum.

Rank	Country
1	Sweden
2	Wolfgang (Austria)
3	Yuri (Soviet Union)
4	WC Kunkley (France)
5	Andre Dame (Slovakia)
6	Columbus
7	Carroll (Australia)
8	Duggan (Australia)
9	Yule
10	Instituto de Empresa
11	APC (Spain)
12	WMC (Korea)
13	The George Washington University
14	ESADE Business School
15	Erasmus University (Netherlands)
16	Calgary (Canada)
17	IFM (France)
18	New Mexico (America)
19	Buenos Aires (Argentina)
20	Colorado Boulder (USA)
21	Western Ontario (Canada)
22	Portland State
23	British Columbia (Canada)
24	Virginia (USA)
25	Darmstadt (Germany)
26	Calgary (Canada)
27	McGill (Canada)
28	Algeria
29	Concordia (Canada)
30	McGill (Canada)

Source: <http://www.beyondbes.com/press-releases>

undergoing a crisis of confidence for business schools to tackle. "The power and relevance of an M.B.A. degree in understanding what firms mean is something that is of supreme importance," says Donald Thies, professor emeritus at the Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ont. Now, though, the process has created just such a pressing need. "Essentially we're flying blind. There is no current theory on which [governments and business leaders] are relying as they attempt to turn around the problems in the American and global economies."

That leaves the door open for M.B.A. programs to adapt their moneys d'œuvre—and for students to do the same. So, while the financial payoff of M.B.A. study might not be what it used to be, consider this: what you learn might end up meaning a lot more. ■

**A new generation
of M.B.A. graduates
sets out to better the
world. Honestly.**

BY KAMES PINCHIN • A fledgling and pickup truck-bound across-Botswana's rural outback business graduate student Malesi Sebit nervously accompanied his first encounter with the country's marginalized and malnourished San people. It was a steamy two-hour drive, and for Sebit, who had spent most of that summer in a small office coordinating the sale of handmade arts and crafts from the region, it was the culmination of an emotional career decision.

In the summer of 2006, while other M.B.A. students and graduates were working their way up through some of the world's most successful and profitable corporations, Selby volunteered as an intern manager with Ben and Ombi, a non-profit wholesaler of handicrafts made by the impoverished in Africa. At the time, he was studying through earning his M.B.A. degree at Concordia University's John Molloy School of Business in Montreal. He excels at working in Africa, and at such a small organization.

with their careers. For Schen, the working trip to Africa wasn't only about teachy-fteachy voluntarism; it was also a calculated effort to put his professional acumen to work for a good cause.

Business grads all across the country are making similar choices, and in increasing numbers. And that's occurring not just because the recent recession has made traditional M.B.A. job harder to find. According to Tina Besset, who teaches strategic management at the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario in London, incoming M.B.A. graduates developing a broadened level of social understanding of issues like climate change, poverty, literacy, women's

A photograph of two men sitting on a wooden bench outdoors. The man on the left is wearing a white jacket and is eating from a white plate. The man on the right is wearing a dark blue jacket and is also eating from a white plate. They are both looking towards the camera. In the background, there is a wooden fence and some greenery.

7004 LISTENERS were 14 volunteers, 7 male and 7 female, aged 18-25 years.

rights and international politics. "They have a greater awareness of people, and their position within society," she says. "They care more about their social insurance."

M.B.A.s are giving the critics of postsecondary education a much harder look now than they were 10 years ago, argues Sharon Tress Paxon, head's director of career management. She deals with underemployment: the situation where graduates are taking low-paying jobs. "The boys coming from my colleagues that many of their students are refusing the five-figure jobs that there are if they don't like the value of the education," says Paxon. "Probably half

been talking about this shift for a long time, but from my perspective business students seem to be increasingly giving their appearance a genuine and thoughtful look."



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Now graduates from his M.B.A., Selva is trying to persuade Canada to take over their currently student-run International Community Outreach Program (ICOP) to ensure survival. Hopes among business people still seem to be successful, but as their definitions of success start to change, demand for philanthropic exchange programs like ICOP is only going to increase. "Through the course of their careers, they're probably going to go through many jobs, in many different industries, and people are beginning to get different techniques for what they consider being successful," he explains. "Not everyone wants to work 60 hours a week making a six-figure salary. For me, that's not what I consider success is success."

The shift away from high-powered, high-paid business programs is similar, according to Selva. She thinks it's a more rational thing. "What's increasing in our society, as we have choices we never had before. This means that students don't feel locked into the same careers as historically they have been," she says. "If you know that you're going to live well enough to be able to have the house and

the car, you won't have to worry about food and providing for kids, you start to ask yourself what you'd get out of personal satisfaction from. These students want a job that connects with their own identity."

Of course, the changing perspectives might not just be about finding yourself, says Selva. The economic meltdown—blatantly many are

M.B.A. grads are more flexible out of necessity, and are more open to alternate career paths like not-for-profit work

genuinely incoherent business school graduates has sparked a major rethink among students. "Unfortunately, it's always catastrophes and tragedies that make us realize that change is necessary," Selva says. "With all the recent corporate scandals, I think people are starting to expect more from their business schools."

The real question isn't limited to students, either. "All of us involved in business either

need to ask what our role has been in fostering a culture that allows executives to walk off with millions of dollars while their firms lay in tatters and society is left with the bill," wrote Harvard Business School professor Jay Lorsch and Robert Khanna in the January/February 2009 issue of *Harvard Business Review*. Grappling with the Matthew Sauer in a March column titled "M.B.A. B.A.?"

"The reality is that business school is being rethought by more and more people who share certain career aspirations—for the most part, to make big bucks—and occupies their time thinking about a few outlandish things that they don't need to know, along with a code of conduct that says, in essence, whatever is legal is ethical, and if it makes money, it's a positive duty."

For David Maykya, dean of the University of British Columbia's Sauder School of Business, the situation isn't that simple. He points out that students now earning their M.B.A. degrees are generally in their late 20s to early 30s, which means that most have been in the business world for only a short period of time. "I don't think it's related to culpability as much as a feeling that they want to help build and live in a new model," he says.

But Maykya cautions that it's not an "interesting year." New M.B.A. grads, he says, are increasingly keen to use high finance and big bucks, but to working on the big socioeconomic issues of sustainability and globalization. This year, Sauder had 14 sustainability-related M.B.A. internships compared with last year's six. At the same time, the percentage of Sauder students who chose to work abroad jumped from 14 per cent in 2008 to 19 per cent in 2009. That's interesting, Maykya says, "in the fact that grads are being more creative and flexible out of necessity, are considering alternative paths, and are willing to work for governments, not-for-profits and social enterprises if it helps them eventually land their ideal job." "The fact that they're integrating their social needs and their work needs is something that's new and also a similar shift in business, as the solutions of problems like climate change are really linking in," he adds.

For Selva, whose fledgling program at Concordia was one M.B.A. student to Uganda this summer, the shifting concept of what a business degree is for—and of how a business education can help others—is a welcome and necessary development. "Students and corporations are starting to look for extra value from the organizations they do business with, buy products from, work for," he says. "They want to see proactive change. That's one of the reasons why a program like ours can now exist compared to 20 years ago. I certainly hope that's a trend." ■

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FINANCIAL TIMES EXECUTIVE M.B.A. RANKINGS, 2008

Similar to the *Financial Times'* regular M.B.A. rankings, the FT's M.B.A. evaluation looks at a variety of performance measures for each school: the career progress of students, faculty quality and the diversity (female and international) of both faculty and students.

Rank	Program	Country
1	Columbia/London Business School	U.S.A./U.K.
2	Kellogg/Hong Kong UST	China
3	Tuck/HBS/Penn/USNYU/Sloan	France/U.S.A.
4	University of Pennsylvania (Wharton)	U.S.A.
5	Institute for Enterprise (IE)	Spain
6	INSEAD	France/Singapore
7	University of Chicago (Booth)	U.S.A./U.K./Singapore
8	Washington University (Olin)	China
9	London Business School	U.K.
10	Columbia Business School	U.S.A.
11	Chinese University of Hong Kong	China
12	Kellogg/WU/Carthage Business School	Germany
13	City University (Jin)	U.K.
14	IMD	Switzerland
15	Purdue/Tuck/CEU/GISMA	U.S.A., Switzerland/Hungary/Germany
16	IE Business School/Columbia	U.S.A.
17	Duke University (Fuqua)	U.S.A.
18	New York University (Stern)	U.S.A.
19	ESCP Europe	France/U.K./Germany/Spain/Italy
20	National University of Singapore	Singapore
21	Kellogg/Tuck University (Schulich)	Canada
22	Northwestern University (Kellogg)	U.S.A.
23	University of Western Ontario (Ivey)	Canada/China
24	University of Alberta/University of Calgary (Haskayne)	Canada/China
25	University of Toronto (Rotman)	Canada
26	Queen's University	Canada
27	Concordia University (Molson)	Canada

GETTING INTO THE GAME

Blame culture. Or genes. Or Dilbert. In engineering, it's a man's world—for now.

BY ALISON RUSSELL BRUNY • The Earthy men had it only partly right. Back in 1965, the British pop duo of Annie Lennox and Dave Stewart recorded *Secrets Are Don't It for Them* with the Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin. A modern feminist anthem, the song makes this interesting observation: "The referee has got a new corner. He got doctors, lawyers, politicians too." Indeed, much of that has come true. At several Canadian medical and law schools, women now outnumber men. But then, so are students in male-dominated fields where men still rule: engineering—and where women's representation has steadily declined in the past few years, a troubling trend.

According to Engineers Canada, the association of women enrolled in engineering programs was on the rise for a full decade before plummeting in 2005, when 20.6 per cent of students were women. But since then, as more and more male leave engineering, the number of women has remained flat. Since 2001, the proportion of female engineering students has dropped nearly every year, to just 17.3 per cent in 2007, and a mere 12.1 per cent in 2008. At the University of Toronto, for one, women comprised 26.6 per cent of engineering students in 2001, but just 14.4 per cent in 2008. And the phenomenon is not confined to Canadian universities: female enrolment in engineering has plummeted across North America.

The reasons are the subject of a heated debate in and outside of the academy. "For nearly, it had due to a lack of effort to encourage women to go into engineering," says Judy Meyers, the past president of the Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Technology and Technology (CCWETS). Indeed,

universities have embarked on a number of initiatives to attract women to the field, and the decline of some of the country's top engineering schools is alarming. Yet the male-female gap continues to grow, confounding professors and university administrators. And before they can address the phenomenon, they must first figure out why it exists.

One hypothesis, endorsed by CCWETS, suggests that women aren't turning away from engineering so much as they're turning toward other sciences that seem to offer not only challenging career opportunities but also the chance to make a difference. As Elizabeth Croft, dean of the Schulich School of Engineering at the University of Calgary, explains, there are now "spicy science disciplines that are hot, and as women might enter in health or environmental sciences instead of chemical or mechanical engineering. "Which so many doors open," says Croft, "you get a little bit of a deflection across all of these areas where women can be successful."

Others suggest the field may still have an image problem—engineers as out-of-touch geeks or nerds. As Tyler Aboumar, the dean of the faculty of applied sciences at the University of British Columbia, says, "The perception of engineering is a pure technology field that doesn't really connect with society as certainly an issue." A recent study reported by Engineers Canada found that young women tend to "equat[e] engineering and technology...with construction work, outdoor work, working in a cabicle, and relying primarily on computers and machines, rather than people." Says Kathleen Sedall, an organizer for the first woman to chair the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, "Others have contributed to a number of stereotypes about engineers."

It's hardly fair: engineering solutions are behind everything from food and hygiene to roads and bridges, and they will be crucial to addressing worldwide issues like energy, clean water and climate change. But "engineering



UBC engineering students, U of T's Aaron Orkay, and engineering change its image.

has not been successful in communicating the fact that engineering connects, indeed, people-oriented and provides great benefit to society," says Elizabeth Croft, the associate head of the department of mechanical engineering at the University of British Columbia.

Or maybe it's just that engineering doesn't have much of an image at all. As Chantal Goss, the chief executive officer of Engineers Canada, says, "We are the silent or invisible profession."

Closely, cultural factors also play a role in how women perceive engineering. It might be seen as a male domain in North America, but that's not true in much of the rest of the world. UBC's Aboumar and UBC's Sedall, dean of the faculty of engineering at the University of Waterloo, are both from Egypt, where Aboumar says engineering isn't considered more appropriate for one gender over the other. It's simply seen as a prestigious field, along with medicine, dentistry and pharmaceutical science. (By contrast, law is "the absolute bête noire," she adds.) In Egypt, adds Sedall, engineering is perceived as "desirable because it leads to high-paying jobs and is



After peaking in 2001, the proportion of women in engineering programs has declined almost every year



important for the country and society." It's about the same in Southeast Asia, across Europe and South America, says Chantal Aboumar, the dean of the faculty of applied science and engineering at U of T, which from

Uruguay, "In South America, engineering gives you prestige that you can contribute to a meaningful way to society."

Some observers suggest—controversially—that men are simply better at engineering

HOW HARD WILL IT BE TO GET IN?
Here are the average first-year high school grades—or the R score in the case of Quebec's CEGEP system—of first-year women graduating engineering school in fall 2008.

	Average Entering Grade
Acadia	84.7%
Alberta	87.4%
UBC	86.4%
Carleton	83.8%
Concordia	79% / R score 78.183
Quebec	80.4%
Lakeland	80%
Lower end	80.7%
Montréal	93.4%
McGill	88.2% / R score 80.84
McMaster	84.9%
Memorial	87.9%
Moncton	81.2%
École Polytechnique de Montréal	R score 78.231
New Brunswick	81%
UNBC	87.3%
University of Ontario Institute of Technology	77%
Ottawa	81.9%
UTM	N/A
Quebec in Chicoutimi	R score 75.22
Quebec in Montréal	R score 74.08
Quebec in Outaouais	Not applicable
École de technologie supérieure	Not applicable
Cowi's	84.7%
Regina	83.4%
Royal Military College	84%
Shenandoah	79.3%
St. Francis Xavier	86.4%
Saskatchewan	90%
Simon Fraser	85%
Toronto	88.9%
Victoria	87%
Waterloo	88.7%
Western	85.3%
Whitby	87.4%
York	85%

Not associated with engineering programs are listed here. These institutions did not release their average entering grade. Quebec's CEGEP system for fall 2007, opening class. Source: Canadian Council on Engineering Education.

and science because of differences in the way men and women think. Perhaps most famously, in 2005, Harvard University president Lawrence Summers—now President Barack Obama's special economic adviser—made some provocative comments about "innate differences" in science and engineering, the career pressures women face and the decline in their wages over time. Speaking at the National Bureau of Economic Research's Conference on Diversifying the Science and Engineering Workforce, Summers wondered aloud whether innate differences between

the sciences may help explain why diverse women succeed in science and why men dominate the top ranks of research. Steven Pinker, a psychology professor at Harvard, subsequently provided support for Sumner's remarks, citing evidence that biological sex differences in social cognition and problem-solving, for example, play a role in establishing and maintaining cognitive sex differences.

The backlash to Sumner's remarks speaks for itself: many in the science and engineering community simply don't buy that argument. Elizabeth Spelke, a psychology professor at Harvard, retorted shortly after his speech that "there is not a shred of evidence for the biological factor." Says USC's Croft: "There may be some evidence that men and women may approach engineering and science problems from different perspectives, so do people from various cultural and social backgrounds, but I have not seen any evidence that indicates, in general, that men are better suited to science or engineering careers than women."

So how are universities trying to encourage women to go into engineering? Part of the effort has been to address the image problem. In particular, schools have attempted to redefine engineering as a helping profession. "At UBC," says Aboukhan, "we are taking engineering back to what it was supposed to be about, which is service to society and making people's lives better."

Schools have sought to recruit more women faculty, a move that might well help to attract more female students, research suggests. In a recent study, researchers at the University of California-Davis and the United States Air Force Academy, for example, found that while professor gender has little impact on male students, "it has a powerful effect on female students' performance in math and science classes, their likelihood of taking future math and science courses, and their likelihood of graduating with a science, technology, engineering, or math degree." As CAPA's Scaddal explains, "All of us have an earlier time imagining ourselves in careers where there are other people like us." Anna Kozman, a civil engineering student at the Schulich school recently on her internship year, agrees, noting that "it is encouraging to see women who are leading a field that has a low percentage of women."

Several Canadian universities have also embarked on a number of initiatives to attract female students to the field as a young age—"when they first enter elementary school," says U of W's Salas—and to better support women in our university. The Schulich program at U of T, for example, pairs second-year female engineering students with Grade 10 students in Toronto for a three-year mentorship

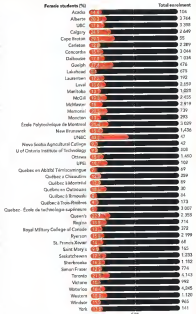
ship, since its inception in 2005, enrolment in the program has more than doubled, to 61, during the 2008-'09 academic year. At the University of Calgary, the student organization Women in Science and Engineering offers educational materials, guest lectures, field trips and scholarships. U of C has grown from 723 members in 1990 to more than 3,600 members in 2004.

While such initiatives might have results

in the short term, it's clear that changing the social and cultural perceptions that might be discouraging women from becoming engineers will require a long and concerted effort. But there's good reason to believe the profession will figure out a solution. "That's a complex and challenging problem, and one that requires a multidisciplinary, team-based approach," says Croft. "Perfect for engineers." ■

ENGINEERING ENROLMENT, SCHOOL BY SCHOOL

Undergraduate enrolment at Canadian engineering schools ranges from a few dozen students to a few thousand, but as these 2008 figures show, the number of female students is less than 25 per cent at all but a handful of institutions.



Source: Engineers Canada

IN CONVERSATION WITH MACLEAN'S

Coyne & Walls: A Political Road Show in Partnership with CBC, the Cable Public Affairs Channel

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UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR STUDENTS in the lab: regional institutions can rise with local issues

REALITY CHECK FOR A BIG IDEA

What the provinces think of the Big Five's revolutionary ideas for university reform

BY KATHY ENGELHART • Diane McGifford, Manitoba's minister of advanced education and literacy, has a bone to pick with Canada's so-called big five universities. She's not alone.

Last month, the presidents of five of Canada's largest universities approached McGifford for an invite to a summit. Over the course of a 50-minute video conference, the presidents of McGill University, the University of Montreal, and the universities of British Columbia, Alberta and Toronto, outlined their vision for a veritable revolution in Canada's post-secondary system—one that could, they claimed, launch our universities to the top

of the international ranks. The one-size-fits-all blueprint that governs higher education policy, they argued, must be replaced with a model that funds research dollars to top-performing schools and lets the rest focus on undergraduate education. And to get there, they were on, Canada needs an aggressive, national innovation strategy.

These bold propositions, contingent on five of Canada's most distinguished academics, have created a buzz, not least among other universities who are unwilling to cede research money nor the handful of large schools. But one thing is clear: without support from the provinces—which more than any other sources, fund post-secondary education—the Big Five's big ideas are unlikely to be translated into action. So McGifford invited provincial education ministers to give us their impressions of the proposals.

In short, they're not impressed.

All the ministers expressed some disquiet that no "strategy" that relies on only five universities is likely to be championed by the provinces. As John Milloy, Ontario's minister of training, colleges and universities, explained, the degree of opposition ran the gamut from strong to less than enthusiastic. Milloy "has trouble with the idea" that Canada has fallen behind in the first place. Rob Norris, Saskatchewan's minister of advanced education, employment and labour, finds "the spirit of the proposal a little harsh." And Manitoba's McGifford is "a little off" of what she feels, quite simply, is "a very good idea": the division of universities into research and non-research institutions.

For McGifford, the proposal risks too much federal influence. A cohesive national strategy on post-secondary innovation, she says, would allow the feds to intrude on a domain that constitutionally belongs to the provinces. "It would almost demand a federal education minister," McGifford explains, "and that would be a huge political problem." She cautions that those provinces with a Big Five school might be more inclined to back the proposed reforms. But in her case, the call is clear: "We don't want a federal minister dictating or directing us in this field of post-secondary education."

For Saskatchewan's Norris, the source of disquiet is not that the plan entails too much federal co-optation, but that it allows for too little. He wants "a pan-Canadian approach" built on more "flexible dialogue" among all provinces. A one-time disquieted that focuses on just a few schools, he says, can't serve as a foundation for a national crusade. Instead, he adds, we need "broad objectives" that jurisdictions can share together.

Restless from the Big Five's home province was decidedly more muted. Ministers from B.C., Alberta and Ontario (Quebec's education ministry declined to comment) were in agreement that universities are not the breeding grounds for innovation that they could be. B.C.'s minister of advanced education and labour market development, Moira Stelmach, pointed to the example of Finland—"the parent country of national innovation." "They have 16 B.S.D. [business and development] people per 1,000 workers," she says. "In B.C., we have about 4." The ministers also concede that a focus-focused national discussion would be helpful.

Still, the caution tempered those convictions with the more polite observation that each institution is special and has a place in Canada's post-secondary family. But, big universities, with their more research-driven structures, are likely to receive research dollars. But Alberta, B.C. and Ontario agree that

the best strategy for directing funds is still the current post-secondary system, which allows every research proposal on the basis of its merit (and under which, by the way, the Big Five already attract a substantial portion of funding). "I have trouble with the idea of some how carving out a slice of money for particular institutions," Ontario's Milloy cautions. "I prefer to have the situation that is in place." The three also touched on a string of other concerns: that specialization would diminish the quality of undergraduate education, for example, or that national discussion strategy would threaten universities' intellectual autonomy.

But underlying the provincial response to the Big Five's goals is a fairly consistent message: Universities, many ministers agree, are more than conduits for national innovation; they are also, and just as importantly, engines of local economic development that should both capitalize on and nurture their communities. For Manitoba, for instance, the issue has a lot to do with water. "Research in water quality is extremely important to the University of Manitoba," McGifford explains, "but also to our province because there is a lot of concern about Lake Winnipeg. If research was concentrated in three Big Fives, who would be interested in doing research on the water in Lake Winnipeg?" Norris agrees, pointing to research at the University of Saskatchewan that's focused on the province's oil sands. Milloy, meanwhile, emphasizes the role that northern universities play in forestry research. "We want 'sustainable development' [the post-secondary system] to get on to the economic and sustainable future of the country, but to our local [historically]," argues Stelmach. Adds Milloy: "It's still interesting to see how narrow the Big Five's emphasis is on research excellence."

The provincial challenge, it seems, might well be to the Big Five's very idea that our priority should be maximizing innovation at all costs. Stelmach doesn't like the Big Five's plan because she's "more optimistic in spirit," she says. And Milloy characterized the real "policy question" as: "How do we work together to make Canada the number one country in the world?"—not the "innovation mission." In fact, a number of ministers were far from keen on the Big Five's core belief in Canada's lagging competitiveness—or our status as a second-tier destination for foreign students. "I don't think that is an accurate picture for how the world perceives Canada," Saskatchewan's Norris insists. "I would disagree that we're not excelling at an international level," argues Milloy.

They might be missing something. In the Times Higher Education ranking of world universities, only five Canadian schools made the Top 100. Australia, with a smaller popu-

lation than ours, boasts seven. As to ranking degree research? Canada has won only 10 major academic awards since the 1940s, putting us at 12th in the world, ahead of Israel. And the money backing our system? There are five universities in the United States alone that each have more resources than all Canadian universities combined.

Ultimately, the ministers we're hesitant to offer much support for Big Five proposals—the call for an "innovation summit" with industry leaders, governments, and universities—thus could spring upon areas of provincial authority. Still, it seems some provinces, especially those with a Big Five



'We don't want a federal minister directing us in post-secondary education,' says Diane McGifford

school, have gone so far as to avoid adopting a Big Five attitude.

Case in point: Alberta—"The first province to have developed a differentiated system for advanced education," explains Donna Babinchuk, spokesperson for the province's Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology. A few years ago, the province transformed a strict, six-sector model that divides and classifies all post-secondary schools—drop by university to technical colleges. "That allows it to stream funding into the 'Core programs: Academic and Research Institutions' category," Alberta is among very much

in the direction of 'focusing its research,'" says Babinchuk. But does that mean it dictates what schools must study? "It doesn't dictate what the priorities are," she stresses. "It provides a way for the research system to get together to work on priorities."

B.C. and Ontario also say that they have taken steps toward a differentiated post-secondary system, whereby it is understood that not all schools will be undertaking top research. "I would think that the universities in B.C. have each offered to have a 'researcher,'" says Stelmach, "and we could recognize each other's strength and understanding their own."

The same provinces also say they've taken aggressive measures to forge stronger links "between the doctors and the drugstore," as Stelmach says—that is, between academic and industry. B.C. pushes an industrial liaison officers and innovation council. Alberta has a second round in innovation infrastructure, strengthening 10 research and innovation organizations. And for Ontario, Milloy is both minister of training, colleges and universities and head of the recently devalued Ministry of Research and Innovation.

Still, while some provinces acknowledge the need for broad-based change, they suggest that institutions already exist to make it happen. "None, for one, understands the need to 're-invent' Canada's Council of Ministers of Education rather than trying to bring together industry, government and universities at our table," I think in a long dialogue through the institution that already exists—that is, a CMCC—can do a fine amount of work. "We may say, 'And let's say we take that education to a unified state, we are really trying to find the need for an academic broad spending band that to play support for systems that would create research funds to priority schools."

In the end, the provinces are talking not for radical action, but for some of what we already have. Still, there are signs that more provinces are on the road to trading post-secondary equity for a more strategic innovation policy. "We've got a lot of inquiries from other [Canadian] jurisdictions" about the differentiated system, says Alberta's Babinchuk. Could this be the Big Five's first real chance? "It's quite recent," she says. "It's a real desire and appears to have durability and alignment." ■



TEACHERS' BEST BEHAVIOUR ON THE WEEKENDS!

British teachers are up at arms against a new code of conduct that they say might prevent them from getting drunk on weekends. More than 10,000 teachers in England are following the rules that require teachers to maintain "positive" in their professional lives—even after hours. The code "unambiguously demands sobriety," says teacher Helen Cookson. "It is an intrusive set of demands on people who have their own private lives to lead!"

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THE NEXT DA VINCI CODE?

Shrouded in secrecy, Dan Brown's new novel is about to hit the shelves. Will lightning strike twice? BY BRIAN BETHUNE

books

It's still uncertain to what extent the Release of Essey will exempt from the high-tech scrutiny of National News things that have to help publishers.

The Last Symbol. Dan Brown's long-awaited follow-up to *The Da Vinci Code* goes on sale Sept. 18, 2009, but publisher Doubleday has confirmed that Brown will appear on *The Today Show*, and talk to the *Wall Street Journal* and *USA Today*. There is, of course, no competing practical need for Brown, who was for the role of world's most famous author with *Harry Potter* (which) J.K. Rowling, to do any thing at all. The *Da Vinci Code* has sold more than 30 million copies in 30 languages since its 2003 release. Doubleday claims it's been read by about 30 per cent of all the adult humans who can read. No matter how much effort authors and publishers pour in this time, the new novel is hardly likely to equal those once in a lifetime sales figures.

On the other hand, having potentially record first run of five million hardcover copies of *The Last Symbol*, Doubleday clearly expects something on the order of the second highest sales of all time. The publisher and its marketing partners, especially Amazon, which has more 70,000 copies on pre-order—have been snapping the buzz up to fever pitch. No more than 10 say personally at Doubleday's various offices have been allowed to read the novel. Plus one reviewer (*Today Show* host Matt Lauer, who signed—possibly with his own blood—a non-disclosure agreement, so that he could sprinkle daily doses during the first pre-release week about the new manuscript in *The Last Symbol*. Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, in an unintentionally hilarious letter posted on its site, declared the online reader was moving houses and earth to keep its first secret, including "the hour guard in its own chain link enclosure, with two ladies requiring two separate people for entry" (What, no details



'The Lost Symbol' will feature Freemasons and the 'hidden' history of Washington. No albino monks, though.

my)? No three-headed dog named Fluffy? Leaving nothing to chance—in marketing as well as security—Doubleday also sent a memo to librarians, warning them they will surely encounter "a few crazies hovering around the desk scoping up on only, inquiring about copies, then inquiring again, then trying to push around the desk, etc. But please, please don't lend them out early."

Even Brown's best post-publication efforts can't make much of a difference to all that lies there is still an expectation—a demand, actually, in our celebrity-obsessed age—that he respond to widespread curiosity, and talk about himself and his work. That's probably not a congenial idea for the very private author. He complained, in the early days of the *Code*'s success, that he could no longer fly on an occasional secret because of the crowds of magazine-seeking fans, winning everything they

went through to get to the books. And Brown can't have enjoyed the resulting stranglehold from disgruntled scholars and militant Catholics, both enraged by the novel's Jesus was just Mary-Magdalene and founded the papacy of France backstory, or by the vicious campaigns that have been of good press.

So, in the *Code* seemed even the pop culture treatment, Brown took before the media in the New England month, embracing reality—and on his own terms—into the public eye. In October 2006, he agreed to address the New Hampshire Humanities Council only if the media were banned from attending. Although one of the council's announced goals is "fostering long lasting partnerships with the media," its soundtrack members agreed to the author's condition. The cult of celebrity has saved the day for him on other occasions, too. Brown once dashed to the airport in Boston, only to realize that he had left his driver's license at home. "Fortunately," he later recalled, "the guy behind me in line had a copy of *The Da Vinci Code*. [He] showed security the author photo and made my flight."

Brown's eventual schism left behind an assortment of controversial impressions. He was a believer in alternative history, the conspiracy school of secret society version of Western civilization, and hence—in an era when large numbers of Americans think their own government brought down the Berlin Wall—saw a secret who was simply taking part in the conspiracy was not a secret. He was a critic who parodied the Roman Catholic Church's professed secret in the U.S. into a secret. He was a person who had no idea how large a person he was about to look out. He just another guy who believes everything he reads on the Web.

Yet even Brown, who has earned \$250 million from his books and their film versions, was once a struggling writer, eager to meet the media's attention then as the media is to remain the focus today. Brown used to talk to journalists, including about his childhood. Now 45, he grew up in New Hampshire near his parents' home, the son of David, an award-winning author, and Constance, a nurse teacher. He attended, for five, once his parents taught there—Phillips Exeter Academy, a U.S. equivalent to Upper Canada College. It was during his education alongside the children of America's elite, Brown would say, that he learned the true power of secret societies. "I grew up surrounded by the clandestine dub at Ivy League universities, the Masonic lodges of our founding fathers and the hidden hallways of early government power."

Inheriting his father's fascination with



as the 1980s owner of such New York businesses. Larry David (right) thinks a *Seinfeld* reunion will help him get back with his ex-wife.

Way nicer than those Seinfeld guys

Unlike Larry David's previous show, 'Curb Your Enthusiasm' is based on a moral code

BY JAMES F. WEISBERG—Carl's first *Enlightenment* is one of the most formulaic sitcoms on television today. Every episode of the show, beginning on seventh season on HBO's *Cable* on Sept. 30, has a similar plot—comedian star Larry David plays a lovable loser bricking every scheme that doesn't work out, in the tradition of *The Mary Ingalls*. The story arc of the new season, a remnant of the cast from here from David's previous show, *Seinfeld* (he, himself), will bring new viewers to *Carl* that might also highlight the fact that *Carl* is less revolutionary than *Seinfeld*.

Not that David's production method on *Carli* is the stuff of traditional sitcoms. The jokes on *Carli* are ingrained on the set, a process that Scribbl and Carli produce. Lancy Charles says "allows for a very organic, spontaneous, and fun atmosphere. I mean, experience an idea that they translate to the audience, I find, and enhance their experience as well." But the jokes are scripted in advance, and like most fictional sitcoms, David builds from around certain story lines repeated over and over usually involving Lancy becoming obsessed with some social convention. In a typical story, he becomes determined to find out if someone is tripping more than him in a restaurant. Scribbl sometimes rejected plans, but it was also known for maintaining story arcs, so that the episode where the main character spends the whole time waiting for a date, Carli the newsmagazine editor, both around a dream topic of Lancy's. "I was like, 'I want to go to the moon,'" says Lancy. "I was instantly struck a couple in having only sex in that car." "It looks like that was a thing," says Kevin Wright, senior vice-president of programming for HBO Canada, "but it actually has the basis of a classic trope in terms of

ting the marks and paying off jokes and
bringing together B and C students."

On the other side of the new season, Curbin becomes more successful as it's no longer about her. Several of the new episodes have plots that have been used so many times in the past that some episode, David deliberately tries to make a game plan of them so that she does not and advise his girlfriend to break up with him, the scene resembles HBO style movies by leaving the other characters isolated by obvious failure, And Larry's willingness to do the Straight Talker is part of an elaborate scheme to gain back together with his wife Cheryl (Cheryl Hines). When Larry tries to convince Jerry Weiss that the season show is a good idea, Scrimshaw color, episode style is a drawback to their old show and a contrast to Larry's over-the-top experience, Easy comes like Laidly Ball with intense changes.

All of that might just be David, consciously or not, going against the grain again. By the time he did *Carb* Near Endgame, every sitcom around the world was trying to imitate *Seinfeld*'s short scenes and lack of sentimentality. For a change of pace, *Carb* is doing things that *Seinfeld* wouldn't have done, with longer scenes and a strangely sweet time machine. Larry does bad things to get Glowy back, but he really seems to love her. Larry's actions, no matter how awful, are based on

a moral cause: he wants to break up with his abominous girlfriend (Vivica A. Fox) but feels it would be wrong to breakup with someone who has been diagnosed with cancer. When George on *Seinfeld* did something moral, it was a change of pace, because the people on that show were amoral bastards, so instead in the series finale (which Jason Alexander goes to criticize on *Comedy*) he is in prison with each other. Larry may fantasize at one point about letting someone die, but he's an older, sinner, yes, the flawed but lovely old

The transitional underpinnings of *Carb* also help it get away with all the non-anatomical things it does. With cringe-inducing comedy of pain (the first new episode makes fun of a mutually unbalanced scenario, played by STP's Catherine O'Hara) we're not balanced by anything conventional, it would be unbearable to watch. But because *Carb* has roots in the safe familiarity of sitcoms, the 16 is a question less that allows David to get away with some less humorous. The third episode has a scene

in which Michael Richards is too obsessed with pictures of bare breasts to hear anything Larry is saying, but it's a normal scene: type-casting comedy that won't drive anyone away even squeamish viewers. Wright says that Carlb has a broad following because "a lot of Larry's circumstances are those that so older demo can relate to." If *Seinfeld* was an innovative show that looked like a sitcom, Carlb is a mainstream show that looks like something else. ■

ACCORDING TO TV, SWINE FLU

"Blame from Sesame Street is appearing in a new public service announcement informing people about swine flu. Doctors warn that if you see a red, furry, high-glitched monster informing you about swine flu, you may already have it." —Cowan O'Brien

"The swine flu is bad. As a matter of fact, former vice-president Dick Cheney is so concerned about swine flu that today he fired his butler in Paris!" —David Letterman

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AMONG the fans of jigsaws are Queen Elizabeth II. Many puzzlers reveal a degree of anxiety about their hobby, says Margaret Drabble.

How jigsaw puzzles got her through

When her husband got sick, a British novelist turned her mind to a happy childhood memory

BY JULIA MCNINCH • Before the plot was set, British novelist Margaret Drabble believed she would suffer from losing focus as a child and a novelist, and "become a jigsaw expert." To that end, she would write a history of the jigsaw puzzle. She pursued producing a work that would make "a pleasant Christmas present... Unlike two of my later novels, [it] would not upset or annoy anybody. It didn't work out that way," she reveals in a new book.

Shortly after conceiving of the project, her husband, Michael Holroyd, was diagnosed with an inoperable cancer that led to two major operations and a regime of radiation and chemotherapy. "As the months went by, Drabble confesses, "I felt myself sinking into the pessimism and depression from which I thought I had at last emerged."

Holroyd's medical ordeal weakened his immune system, leaving the couple mostly housebound. Drabble set up a jigsaw work station in their London home. "I could pass a peaceful hour or two, assembling bits of pieces of cardboard into a provisional pattern, and thus regain an illusion of control." However, instead of helping her, her jigsaw hobby found her mind kept wandering back to her childhood and the evenings she spent with her aunt Phyllis, her mother's younger sister, who always found room in her messy kitchen table to lay out the pieces of a jigsaw.

The *Patterns in the Carpet: A Personal History with Jigsaws* is "a memoir," Drabble explains in the foreword, "although parts of it may look like a memoir." Nor is it a history of the jigsaw, although she writes at times as if she is a hybrid, "the writer, exploring, 'I have never been a tidy writer'."

In the book, Drabble recalls how her mother was disappointed in "messiness" her mother's attitude to Phyllis, who never married and lived alone, was "offensively patronizing." Drabble's aunt was so accustomed to living alone that she was "slightly uncomfortable with the concept of conversation. Auntie Phyllis talked until talk, and had to be encouraged."

Among fans of the jigsaw are Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II. Drabble observes, "Many jigsaw puzzles reveal a degree of anxiety about their hobby, finding it reveals a nervousist this might expose them to hostile analysis. Do they do puzzles because they are lonely? Or because they are dyslexic or autistic and so good at female concentration? Or because they are tired, exhausted and nervous, satisfied with recreating the world inside, like would be actors who prefer paint by numbers? Or because they know that jigsaws are designed to waste time, and that the telling of time is, as Daniel Defoe said, the worst of crimes?"

Drabble notes that the first jigsaw puzzles were "dissected maps" and probably first produced by a printer and cartographer by the name of John Spilbury, born in 1789. Spilbury is credited with the idea of mounting maps on thin mahogany boards and passing them along country estate boundaries with a "fine mahogany saw." "These puzzles seem to have been specifically designed to add as

an amusing distraction and for children."

When Drabble was a young teenager she received the gift of a jigsaw that contained her as a child and talked in her bedroom, reading books, for which she was rewarded by her father. "You should look down on games," he said. "What's the point of allowing Jane Austen, and then depriving her way that characters spend their time. Come and play."

"Sitting over a jigsaw as an adult, one may feel foolish," Drabble acknowledges, but then goes on to summarize the many benefits. "Even jigsaws you learn about the brush strokes of Van Gogh, the clouds of Constable, the reflections and shadows of Monet, the lookwork and lines of the Dutch masters, the fish scales of Titian. I studied all of these through assembling the pieces of jigsaw."

She describes the lengthy task of assembling the notoriously difficult 140 piece jigsaw of Jackson Pollock's abstract expressionist masterpiece *Convergence*. "This is not to suggest that those who do jigsaws debate their solvability that they are creating a new work of art. They are not so apt as it isn't an art. It isn't a hobby. It isn't even a craft. It isn't quite a game either. It's a different kind of act. Just what kind of an act is it?" Drabble admits to never quite finding the answer to it. "Regardless of the free will and drip of risk all an little dry had discrete cardboard pieces in a paradoxical anxiety, but very satisfying. Why I keep looking for the answer?" ■



MOST IMPROVED KATHERINE HEIGL

Gray's Anatomy star Katherine Heigl, who started smoking at age 14, has admitted to being a "slave" to the unhealthy habit. If a cigarette was once her beloved mistress, though, there's no longer time. After realizing that smoking was ruining her life, the blond bombshell, now 30, decided back in July that it was time to quit. She's gone more than a month now without a puff and, according to a friend, "she's so much better."

THE DISCONNECTED: George Clooney is up in the air (left), Michael Douglas has a cracked marriage and runaway libido in *Solitary Man*WHISTLE-BLOWER: Matt Damon in *The Informant* is at straight-arrow hero's embarrassing reveal (see company he's selling on

Masters of the universe in free fall

Toronto's film festival launches a new fashion in male heroism ready-made for the recession

BY BRIAN D. JOHNSON • You forget you're watching Matt Damon. He's playing a spy. But with a dorky moustache, a tragic and anaemic 2010, putting on his best, there's no trace of the dynamic movie agent from the Bourne franchise. In Steven Soderbergh's *The Informant*, an off-kilter comedy based on a true story of corporate corruption, Damon plays Mark Whitacre, an agoraphobic who became the highest-ranking whistle-blower in U.S. history during the late '90s. But unlike most whistle-blowers—such as the one in *The Insider* or Soderbergh's own *Zero Dark Thirty*—he is a straight-up coward. Far from it. While spending years working as the top FBI expert in prison-finding operations, Whitacre spins an elaborate web of lies, and embroils millions from the company he was running on.

Presenting at the Toronto International Film Festival (Sept. 10-19) and opening commercially next week, *The Informant* is one of a new breed of movies about men of influence in dire straits who avert their eyes to a cracked ethical code. Each year, TIFF showcases the fall line of various films that vie for Oscar glory, genres that pressure to do something about the human condition. And whether by accident or design, many of this year's most prominent titles reflect a new fashion in heroism that seems tailor made for the recession: moral bankruptcy.

The new Hollywood hero is a high-flying messiah of the universe who's losing domestic air. As fast as the ground vanishes beneath his feet, he's here, a friend, a womanizer, a drug addict, a narcissist, or all of the above. He's Michael Douglas in a disgraced con man's tale with a cracked marriage and a runaway libido in *Solitary Man*. He's David Duchovny in the

head of a model family that turns out to be an utter sham in *The Joneses*. He's Nicolas Cage in a end-of-the-world caper who inflates an airplane in *Warrior* (Hemphill's *Real Love*). Part of *Call New Orleans*, *On the Beach* is a smooth con artist who seduces a 16-year-old English schoolgirl in *An Education*, seducing her father as a glibly account ploy. Or take George Clooney in *Up in the Air*, who discovers the marvel of dishonesty in *The Invention of Solitaire*—a comedy set in a world where everyone tells the truth.

Up in the air, perhaps the most body-snatched film premiering at TIFF, stars George Clooney as an obsessive frequent flyer who earns his living firing people for downsizing corporations. And he loves his job. Loosely based on the novel by Walter Kirn, it's written and directed by J.J. Abrams. Reprising TIFF co-director Cameron Bailey's earlier role as a man who must devote the 11-year-old Canadian state to the needs of major film makers, "It feels like it was directed by a 40-year-old," says Kirn. "There's not much receding hair, a philosophical world of substance. It's about the whole class of people who live that life literally, 30,000 feet and seeing what happens when the sky falls."

Consequently, Damon, Clooney, and Clooney's co-stars in Soderbergh's *Zero Dark Thirty* franchise—both play plausible and frequent flyers who inhabit a precarious cabin of personal confidence that veers on the delirious. And both their movies reflect the weight of a corporate culture in free fall. "You walk into a huge room where you try to make sense of the situation," Soderbergh told us last week. But film like his, he cautions, is resonant with a culture addicted to decon-

struction whose moral compass has gone haywire. "There's a lot of hypocrisy about," he says. "People are responding to moral signals they're getting. You see people getting rewarded in one area, then punished in another. When no one will tell you the truth about what's going on, what are the arguments for me being a model citizen?"

Ironically, although *Up in the Air* and *The Informant* have landed with sensory bang, Soderbergh and Rialson have spent years trying to bridge their respective movies to the screen while juggling other projects. Which suggests they were tapping into the early morose of a culture long before it crashed in the recent economic collapse.

After reading Tom Hanks' novel's swagside live heroism, *The Informant* (2009), Soderbergh says he decided to spend time seriously jolly to disengage it from other whistle-blower movies. "But also it's got out of the best building blocks of comedy—their characters and get-out-of-control. The things Whitacre was doing were so ironic." And now, Soderbergh adds, "I'm really glad we made it so comically because we're watching straight versions in the paper every day."

Abrams, meanwhile, started writing *Up in the Air* even before choosing his feature debut, *Thank You for Smoking*. "This has been in my heart and soul for a long time," he says on the phone from Los Angeles. "What spoke to me as the idea of living solid, being able to look at it and know the script, it became more and more relevant. It's right for the time because we're living in the most disorienting time in human history. We falsely believe we're connected with more people than ever before because of texting and Facebook and Twitter. But we actually don't connect to any of these people."

To offer it its protagonists, Ryan Reynolds, a wickedly off-the-beat being unattached in

every sense. "His way to live a completely disconnected life," says Abrams. "And what he does for a living is to cut people off from what is often more important to them—their jobs." Reynolds directed character from *Iron Man* but conceived a new plot, in which Reynolds' bright world is threatened by a woman (Anna Kendrick) who proposes firing people online rather than face-to-face.

Rumors wrote *Up in the Air* specifically for Clooney and says he can't imagine any one else playing Reynolds. "George Clooney believes moral values," he says. "He's a classical sense of humor. And he seems to be going through a self-examination with this movie. It's hard to say that without sounding like an arrogant prick, but I think it will go down as one of his greatest roles. It's his most vulnerable. He opens up and does something different than he's ever done before."

A movie star's glamour is meant to be invisible, but we're all trying to see under the hood. Clooney likes to go out of his way to turn his celebrity into a sign of some cool and intellectual intelligence—he poses up as a maniac near another TIFF premiere, *The Men Who Stare at Goats*, a successful comedy based on a true story of the U.S. Army's secret attempt to create "super-soldiers" with psychic powers. Clooney's character is not unlike the deacon dead he played in *The Coen brothers' 10 Brothers*, where Abrams and Damon first met on a road trip.

Playing an underdog hero is one thing, but what's more exciting is when a star becomes cool and reveals an untidy character, especially if the secret to be playing himself. The summer Adam Sandler did it in *Funny People*, bringing a scary persona to his role as a terminally ill comedy star who seemed just like Adam Sandler, and was born, not less, selfish and spoiled. Not a nice person

Yet Sandler seemed all the more sympathetic for revealing that side of himself. Just as you have to hurt it to Douglas, with his rap as a warrior, for knowing a role that cuts so close to the bone.

In a culture of viral anonymity, even the most innocent protagonists can't help but be infected. Take *A Serious Man*, a black comedy from the Coen brothers. It's about a middle-aged professor (Michael Stuhlbarg) whose life unravels as he's bricked by a student, rebuffed by his children and betrayed by his wife for another man who supports his wife. The movie is set in 1961, in a dual Minnesota suburb, and to the Jefferson. *Up in the Air* is a comedy set in a world where everyone tells the truth.

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Clooney plays a frequent flyer who earns his living firing people. And he loves his job.

WE'RE STALKING... SPENCER PRATT

Spencer Pratt would like you to call him King. Beginning after the 20th anniversary of his first movie, *Party Lines*, TV star who appears on MTV's *The Hills*, he wants to make his royal title official, changing his name to King Spencer Pratt. "I've decided since there is a Queen of England and a Prince William, there should be a King of America (immediately snorts)." What does he wish, *Hill* readers, think? "Doesn't that automatically make me a queen?"



"HELLS-MAPPING TECHNOLOGY" and the like can work miracles on the male physique. But even miracles have their limits.

Honey, does this make me look thin?

For the man who has it all—a little too often: the butt-cinching, gut-squeezing male girdle

BY MAISON PATRIZIO • There's actually nothing for it for once. This male woman, who has been the focus in question for nearly a decade and a half, is troubled by his femininity, looks twice when her better half is getting dressed. She's a modern type not given to cozen adjectives, so they must be caused out of her. "Rufus," she, uplifted? Is that it? "Tighter," she says finally. "I don't know. Use your imagination."

An ordinary looking as can be, though, "Precision Underwear," is manufactured by Australia-based Equinox and released this month, is a glorified inclusion piece, racking and pulling and holding everything in. In a way, when it's worn, boys wear spandex and grown men wear leggings, perhaps the idea of a girdle for men isn't that surprising. Equinox, which also produces post-showering T-shirts, has a proposition: if men can treat a woman's clothing as a fetish, why not their own? "It's a sexy piece of gear," she says, as she looks at the "Honey" (a 365-page zip), as she looks at the "Honey" (a 365-page zip), as she looks at the "Honey" (a 365-page zip). "It's a sexy piece of gear," she says, as she looks at the "Honey" (a 365-page zip).

"We call it subtle support," says Equinox's Michael Pini, a B.C. native who has spent much of his career thinking about men's underwear. "The drawers, he says, 'give you a perfect bubble butt—no engineered butt.' And what about this?" "We've engineered the pouch as well," he says, "to give you the perfect bubble butt." "We've engineered the pouch as well," he says, "to give you the perfect bubble butt."

At the Hot Pink Party for breast cancer research in order to raise money, Rufus's daughter Michael Korn said she wished there was an equivalent of Spanx for men. The market has

spoken. Equinox is one of several purveyors of "men's underwear," a market in the category that's taking the heterosexual male's propensity to pump, massage, sculpt and pluck to a new logical extreme. Both Spanx and Yummie Tintinn, best known for balancing the female form, recently introduced men's lines. Calvin Klein now sells briefs with "Hudson support for a senior silhouette," while the doctored Jeremy Jones sells a \$159 under that promises to eliminate "the dreaded 'side boob' appearance."

Equinox makes no mention of bubble butt or enhanced penis size in its marketing. Rather, the underwear at "Honey" says "support technology" that "supplies glacial results for improved body contours"—an apparent nod to the average male's appreciation of the male physique. Similarly, Equinox T-shirts, which sell for \$15 to \$125, are marketed as "posture-enhancing 'body-in-motion' technology," and not as a way to buff away unsightly love handles and belly mounds. "It's more than a one-dimensional product," Pini says.

No wonder that a man's body is a body-consciousness, it seems. "Fitness, security and enhancement are equal opportunity issues," says Toronto local writer David Lippman. "There are differences in habits, like walking and high heels, but I think

we are seeing that there's actually very little difference between women and men." Both sexes will suffer for the sake of a fashionable. Wearing Spanx's Shaping Bodywear, one of the company's biggest sellers, is akin to "wearing a full body medical bandage wrapped around you by a masseuse with a wand," as a friend put it to me recently. Similarly, getting into an Equinox T-shirt is like trying to don a transpencil. Once you manage, your chest is compressed and your love handles, which recently had a fine-tuned contour, are pulled out behind a layer of polyester, nylon and spandex. Strangely, the long-sleeved T-shirts stretch to the upper thighs, making the wearer feel especially for any Hollywood starlet who has had to get out of a one-piece dress. All for a half-inch of your waist.

The discomfort, it turns out, is intentional. "It will help make your own awareness," says the company website, making you literally feel the consequences of overindulgence. In other words, low weight, diet, or that expensive shirt will be all the more uncomfortable. Which poses one problem: what happens when the butt-cinching, posture-enhancing, chest-improving product comes off, and you find that the body is smaller than when you put it on? There are other risks of the male—like loose, sagging lighting and marriage. And after all, the second impression doesn't rear nearly so much as the first. ■



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PHOTOGRAPH BY JACQUES LANTIERE
ART BY LANE

WAINWRIGHT'S first opera, *Prince Darius*, will have its North American debut at Toronto's Lambeau Arts Festival in 2010

Rufus has a message for Toronto

There's a new CD/DVD and a biography, but first Rufus Wainwright has to make amends

BY ELIO LAMARCA • On the phone from his home in New York, pop star Rufus Wainwright is at a loss for words. The 34-year-old jazz-swinging singer-songwriter—who has an album to his name—usually has something clever to say about any subject, but when asked about his next trip to Toronto, all Wainwright can manage is a nervous smile. There it comes, a moment for the artist. A life over a year ago the British newspaper the *Guardian* published a story that quoted Wainwright saying this was Canada's largest city. "I wish I didn't have to go back there. It's trying to be the New York of the Midwest." After the story broke, the Internet was awash with Wainwright's first opera, *Prince Darius*, would make its North American debut at Toronto's Lambeau Arts Festival in June 2010.

The "Rufus from Toronto" story flooded the blogosphere once more, setting off a slew of hate comments directed toward the singer even though this isn't the first time that Wainwright—who is openly gay and highly opinionated—has made news with his words, his critics are no less vocal about it. "I'm not going to backpedal. I've had bad experiences [in Toronto] but I'm in it for the long run," he says. "I was the first person in North America to start a dance and theater troupe, so when I was in Toronto [for the first time], I was going to find out if I could love the city again."

Clearly enough, the story behind *Prince Darius* is an acting opera singer plots a comeback and then falls for a newspaper writer who is reporting on her return to the stage. The reason has been a controversy as Wainwright's own brand of humor: the independent joined the performance, calling it "the best band, as we're doing," the *New York Times*,

though calling it "muddled," also said it was filled with "savage of cutting ambiguity." Regardless of the critical reaction, the next production is an impossible feat for any musician. Life with an increasing life of live touring pop-star moments, the opera's many scenes, says Wainwright, are placed from his very own backyard.

"There's a lot of me in this opera. Beyond the fact that the artist gets washed and held by a journalist—which has happened a number of times in the past," he explains. "I have had to make some choices myself, whether it was to [my] record company being destroyed [Wainwright's last label Decca was sold to EMI in 2005] or just recovering to my natural form. I know what it means to have to go back out there and make your own name."

According to Wainwright, *Prince Darius*'s production story is as grandiose as its content. "I started off very excited and almost finished my last draft of the libretto in the Big Apple," he explains. "Then I had to find a new home," he says, speaking to the fact that New York's Metropolitan Opera—which commissioned the work—dropped out because *Prince Darius* had been written entirely in French. It had to find the project earlier before settling on premiering at Manchester's Palace Theatre.



THE DOLLY ROCKERS... HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY So there's a 1940s in every song that you know. I think she's got everything but she can't stop singing. / Well she was real plain, not too plain and had no thought / But now she can rock it and she's got her boots on / All the boys will pay / When she's out for party / If they're straight or gay she won't mind at all / All the boys attend to / Who's coast will they probably with—Dolly Digger, the debut single from British band the Dolly Diggers

"I didn't stop there," he says, eager to tell his own version. "In the middle of the [Manchester] production, the director and the director committed suicide," he continues in a shaky voice. "They watched the whole ending of my first act and they were so moved. I quickly contacted my lawyers and got it changed back to my original draft. It felt like a physical violation. I'm fine now but at the time, I wanted to tell myself. Now I know why there are laws against changing an artist's material."

Those who can't wait until next year for Wainwright's material will have to settle for a recently released *Rufus Wainwright* by Rufus Wainwright. The new CD/DVD, which Wainwright's label New Line Music released in the summer of 2007, the disc's track list includes some of Wainwright's most popular hits, including *Learning to Cope* (from his last studio album, *Release the Stars*) and a new cover of Neil Young's *I Love a Boy*.

The latter track, which Judy Garland famously sang in her early 1950s concert, is a throwback to Wainwright's previous love life and widely acclaimed *Rufus Wainwright* by Rufus Wainwright. "When it comes to a new challenge for me, Judy Garland is right up there," he says. "She represents the heart and soul of what a musician really is. I think about a singer who can be so honest."

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THE APOCALYPSE is no place for race, a dull-fucking, no-dick-marking, job-avoiding, blow-dry-hair-smoothing, hand-dryer-air-blasting man

If the end comes, don't count on me

The toil of rebuilding civilization will expose me for what I am: a completely useless man

SCOTT
FESCHUK

Given the choice, I'd prefer we don't have an apocalypse. Sure, on some level it would be cool to live in a dystopian hellcape as if such man is primed to be a high maintenance who's going to be a liability. But it's not like we have a choice. We're not like the natives of the Amazon who are being wiped out by the rain forest. We're not like the natives of the Amazon who are being wiped out by the rain forest. We're not like the natives of the Amazon who are being wiped out by the rain forest.

One will be so excited about not being dead that for a couple of weeks we'll probably all just make out with each other and make out. All of us. For being wrong about global warming causing humanity's near demise, but eventually some high maintenance who's going to be a liability. But it's not like we have a choice. We're not like the natives of the Amazon who are being wiped out by the rain forest. We're not like the natives of the Amazon who are being wiped out by the rain forest.

In my nightmares, I picture it. We're just and around the campfire. The talk turns to avoiding up jobs. "I'll need to see medical records," says one person. "I'll draw up medical records and then for personal shelter," says another.

It's the new norm. Everyone looks to me. "I'll work hard and really concentrate," I tell them. "I may be able to remember all the words to Sumo 4."

If I'm lucky at the point, the apocalypse will be postponed all together. Otherwise, this is their cue.

Probably, it's a bad time to be useless, especially in the current. According to the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency, there are 10 Americans live in a place at any time for some kind of disaster, be it hurricane (Florida), Louisiana, earthquake (California) or pandemic (Chicago, New York). Yet the new kind of FEMA says the agency is rebranding as "disaster relief" instead, they'll be expected to pick up "local first responders."

Loath and gentlemen of North America, count me on this. If I am your first responder arriving at your aid in a moment of epic ones and life-threatening peril, you are going

to want to do one thing and one thing only: you are going to want to wait for the second responder. I'm not very good with broken bones and, um, is that a drop of blood... (Fishes probably.)

Believe me, I've given this a lot of thought. I have no idea what I could do to help my species get back on its feet. I suppose I possess the ability to laugh but—unless the Maclean's becomes a useful element of military defense—I lack any skill worthy of trading in the industry of humanity's rebirth, the remnants of civilized society will surely go to the shambles and either find me to their aid or bear dogs or sacrifice me, to whoever desire to be human at the time, such as the Volcanic God or Gosh's Skull.

Could I be a doctor? No. A nurse? Double no. I lack medical training and scrubs don't flatter my curves.

An engineer? Oh dear Lord, no. My lady won't even let me near their Lego toys. I "helped" with their fish aquarium (I ended up looking like a Jedi 7-Heroes). Scientist? Nope. Carpenter? Nope. Mechanic? Huh, you're funny. Woodcutter? No, but if you give me \$5 I can verify for prepackaged lumber at a hardware store.

Could I be a guy in a hockey mask who rides on top of a post-apocalyptic vehicle carrying a machine as part of a marauding group? Hard to tell for sure. Maybe I can. It sounds doable. I think I could handle [said of our despatching myself].

Better to risk to what I'm good at. Attention young heads of civilizations: do any of your budding scientists require someone to take an afternoon nap?

And if global warming caused humanity's near demise...

ON THE WEB: To read Feschuk on the farcical world he'd like, visit maclean.ca/facebook

MURRAY ALBERT NESBITT

1951-2009

He loved heavy machinery and worked 30 years in a salt mine, making sure salt 'spilled in the right places'

Murray Albert Nesbitt was born on Sept. 5, 1951, in Brimley, Ont., just east of Lake Huron. With two older sons and a younger brother, he was the third child of Florence and George Nesbitt, who had a farm outside Brimley, not far from Brimley's local parson's some 100 metres off the farm—Florence had a job at a grocery store, while George ran a farm damage business—so the kids were often left to do the farm work and get supper on the table. Even then, Murray had a love of heavy machinery, helping his father when he could. "Once you get diesel fuel in your veins, you never lose it," he used to say.

As a teen, Murray didn't use much diesel oil, and some weren't his thing, but he had many friends, and a solid sense of humour. His sister Brenda Kitching recalls how, when she got married, she left "disappointed" that Murray disappeared from the reception with out saying goodbye. She and her husband left, unaware that her brother, then 18, had hidden in the back seat. "We drove about four miles, and then up pops Murray, having a laugh," she says.

After high school, Murray took a job at a nearby trailer factory. Day and about in Brimley was a friend, he spotted Connie Nesbitt, a local farm girl, and worked over "with the intention of getting an introduction," she recalls. "The next day was a relationship, going on dates to the drive-in they were married on April 28, 1972. The bride made her own wedding dress, which had an engine room. "We had so much to talk about," Connie says. "We could talk forever."

The couple had a son, Jeff, in 1973, and a daughter, Cathy, in 1974. Connie initially stayed home with the kids, while Murray did shift work. In addition, "he had a ditching machine and a backhoe, and did work on the side," says Jeff. "Dad told me I first ran a backhoe when I was two years old." Murray was a member of the Lions Club, the Masonic Lodge, and the Royal Canadian Legion. A testament to his community involvement, he served as councillor for more than 16 years, first for the village of Brimley and later for the township of North Huron (consolidated in 2001). "He was a great union man," Connie says. "He believed in fairness above all."

But Murray "had his demons," says Jeff, who notes that his father battled depression for much of his life. "He wasn't home as much

as the kids would like," adds Connie. Cathy Nesbitt-Tremore, their daughter, admits the sometimes missed her father, yet her most vivid memory of him as a happy man "I remember him saying, 'I'll take you for a drive and get you a treat.' " Cathy says. "He stopped in a farm stand and bought peas on a shell. That was his idea of a treat."

In 1986, Murray took a job at the Sifto salt mine at nearby Godwin, where he would work for almost 30 years. Murray had many jobs, starting as a scaler scraping salt off the walls, then blasting with dynamite. "His favourite was control control," Connie says, which involved "making sure the salt spilled in the right places."

Yet mining could be dangerous: in 1981, "there were two fatalities in a two week period, both of them on our shift," says Alice Robb, now the senior health and safety representative, who trained Murray. "It was hard to accept." In 1996, Murray's partner was diagnosed with cancer. Murray did his best with his two hands, the main summer. The mining industry as a whole has gotten much safer since then, Robb says: in the early '90s, about 100 deaths across Ontario would die each year, he notes. Now, it's closer to two. "If we can go from 20 to two, we should be able to get that to zero," Robb says. "Murray said I would talk about this."

In July, Connie moved from her job (she'd worked at Farm Credit Canada since 1980). That same month, Murray celebrated his 50th anniversary with Connie. A loving grandfather to five young kids, he "desperately wanted to make up for his lost time," says Cathy. He and Connie had purchased a trailer and were making trips to Arizona. He work, Murray had earned enough money to work above ground. Jeff took a job at the Sifto mine, too, and would drive to work with his father. Murray didn't plan to retire till he turned 61.

On Aug. 25, a year to the day after Jeff began working at the mine, Murray was inside a storage dome, attaching down salt pans with an excavator. The excavator began to leak oil, Murray left about clearing salt away from the machine so vibrations could get in to fix it. "He must have been too close to the dome," Robb says. "They're covered with salt, so maybe he wouldn't breathe." Although the incident is still under investigation, Murray somehow fell into an acher and was buried in salt. He was 57 years old.

BY NATE LOHMEYER



Profile

George Sifto Mines, Sifto Salt Works, Ontario Salt Producers' Association, Glider pilot, volunteer firefighter, and like a pangloss

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